



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

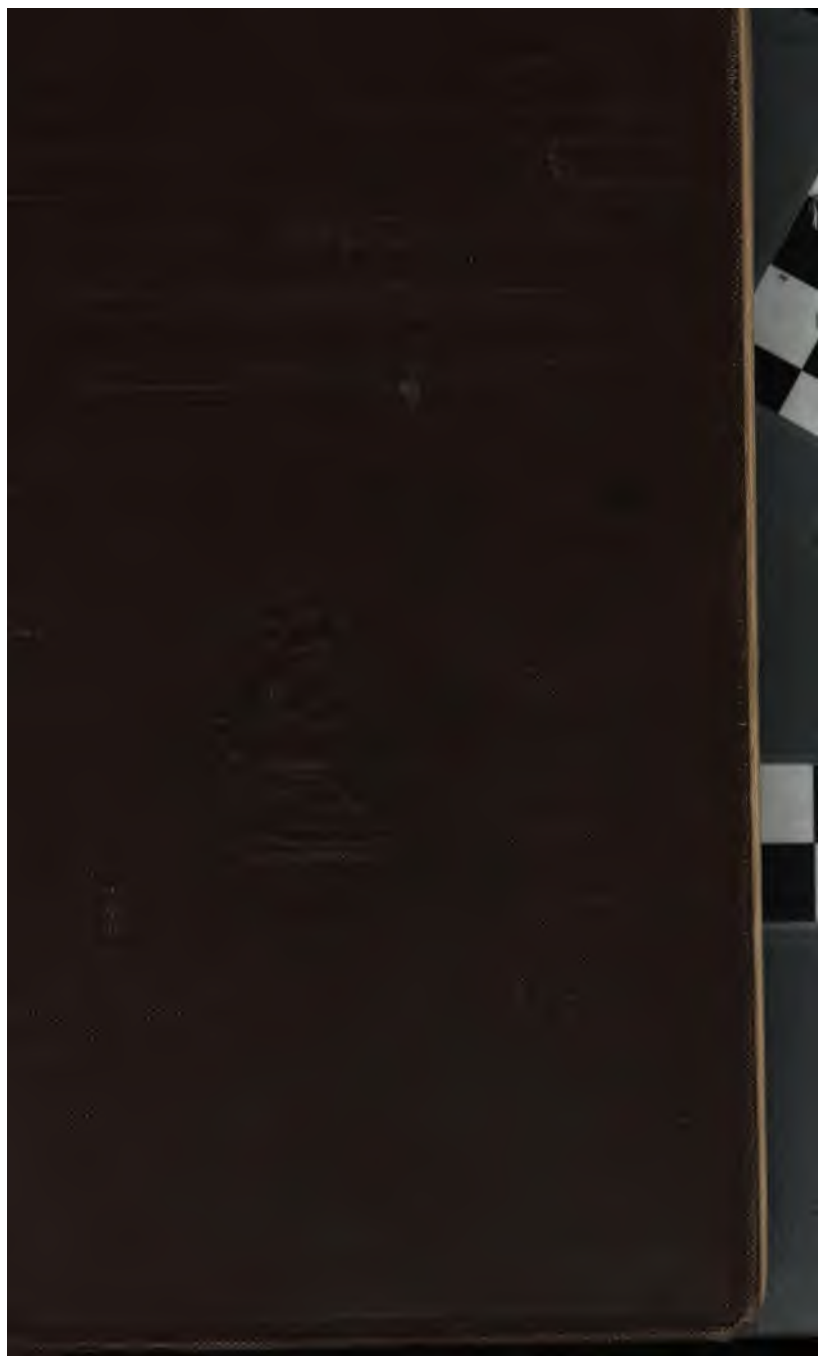
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

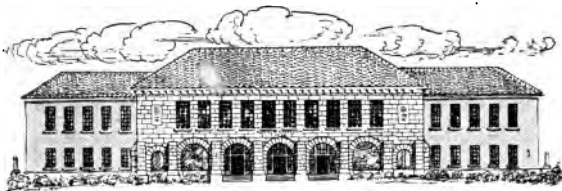
We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
LIBRARY



LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY









Andrea del Sarto

ANDREA DEL SARTO AND HIS WIFE

Riverside Educational Monographs

EDITED BY HENRY SUZZALLO
PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

**THE
TEACHING OF POETRY
IN THE HIGH SCHOOL**

BY

ARTHUR H. R. FAIRCHILD
PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI



STATIONERY DEPARTMENT

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON, NEW YORK AND CHICAGO

The Riverside Press Cambridge

COPYRIGHT, 1914, BY ARTHUR H. R. FAIRCHILD

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

246486

C

YSA 981: 0807MATS

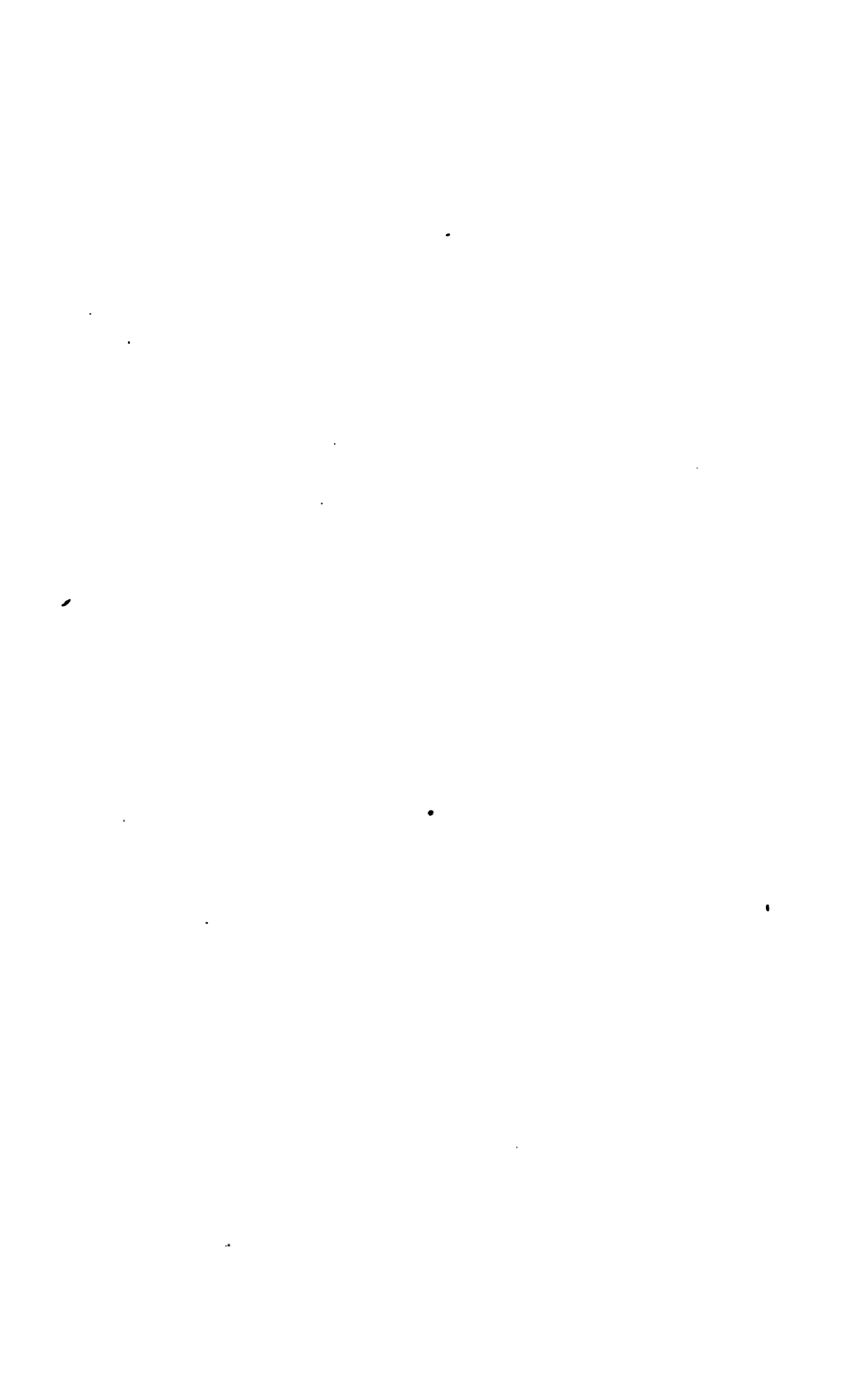
The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
U . S . A

TO
G. W. R.



CONTENTS

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION	vii
I. INTRODUCTORY	1
II. SOME PRACTICAL WORK	22
III. SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS	70
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES	177
OUTLINE	183



EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

THERE has lately been much criticism of the teaching of literature in the high school. It has been suggested, by those who have attempted to measure school work by its effect upon later life, that recent generations of high-school students have not gained all that they should from this study. They point out that we have been led to expect that twelve years of school contact with the best literature would establish an abiding interest in good reading; but we have found that high-school graduates, once they enter upon their life-work, give a surprisingly small part of their leisure time to reading of any sort, and still less to reading the world's best literature.

It may be that this unsatisfactory result is not altogether new; that the school, without being aware of the fact, has always partially failed in its teaching of literary content. The boys and girls of the Latin schools and academies of the past years represented a highly selected population. As compared with the high-school students of to-day, they came of a favored cultured class.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

They did not exact of their teachers that skill in teaching literature which is now required. They came to the school with larger cultural backgrounds; and from the school they turned to a life among professional and social groups which sustained literary standards in reading, writing, and speech. Under such circumstances it was not natural for the schoolmaster to suspect that his teaching of literature was too formal, too exclusively intellectual, too feelingless; and that the home atmosphere sustained literary interest and taste in spite of ineffective teaching at school. It was, indeed, quite human for the teacher of traditional self-assurance to accept the result as a product of his own conscious workmanship, when in reality it had been accomplished by the unconscious, but none the less vital, influence of other agencies.

Such an attitude of self-confidence is no longer possible, because the pupils now in our schools come from homes of a different sort, and have to face altered working conditions. Great numbers of students now come to the classroom without a single tendency favorable to a literary interpretation of life; and they go forth to a commercial and industrial existence which is devoid of poetic feeling. For these, the school offers almost the

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

sole opportunity for the development of literary taste. What the teacher does not inculcate, will, in most cases, never be achieved. Such a situation is likely to reveal, sometimes with startling suddenness, the futility of much of our formal, academic teaching of literature. When the teacher at last really perceives youth, dutifully but mechanically, gathering information about poets, poetic forms, and the themes of poetic composition, without once being fired with an intrinsic interest in poetry itself, he loses his assurance. At the same time he is a bit uncertain whether the way out of his difficulty is to be found in the reconstruction of his own teaching practice, or in frankly admitting that some students are doomed never to care about the poetic interpretation of human life.

There are a radical few who conclude that little can be done by aiming high, with, say, children of immigrants destined for industrial life, and who propose to do their best in refining such interests as they find among the youth they teach. In the high school they would put the emphasis on reading the current literature of the weeklies and monthlies, to the exclusion of real and abiding literature. In the elementary and evening schools they would teach reading from the trade-

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

catalogues and daily newspapers. But for the most part the teachers who have become discontented with the present situation have sufficient intuition to sense the importance and universality of poetic values in life, and hence in education. They cannot welcome a program of reform which provides escape from responsibility by a kind of treason to the civilization of which they are the teaching representatives. They prefer to believe that the present situation requires no relinquishment of goals or standards, but merely the facing of a more difficult teaching problem with clearer vision and a more rational technique. From their point of view there is to be a readjustment of means without the compromise of ends. They are quite willing to begin their labors where they find them; but they are determined ultimately to develop an interest in those refined interpretations of life which come to men through the poetic energy. To them the present span of school life seems too limited an opportunity for even an approximately complete accomplishment. There is much to be done for those who have suffered cultural misfortune. Yet, even under such circumstances, the teacher feels that the chief thing is to leave a vital interest in poetic things, even though this obligation

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

restrict in considerable degree, the types of literature enjoyed and studied in detail.

Having the faith of this group of teachers and thinkers, the editor has long wished for a discussion of the whole case of literature, more particularly poetry, in the high school. It is a singular good fortune that gives him the opportunity to present the monograph which follows.

“YOU might read all the books in the British Museum (if you could live long enough) and remain an utterly ‘illiterate,’ uneducated person; but if you read ten pages of a good book, letter by letter,—that is to say, with real accuracy,—you are forevermore in some measure an educated person. The entire difference between education and noneducation (as regards the merely intellectual part of it) consists in this accuracy.” — *Ruskin*.

“At school I enjoyed the inestimable advantage of a very sensible though at the same time a very severe master. . . . At the same time that we were studying Greek tragic poets, he made us read Shakespeare and Milton as lessons: and they were lessons, too, which required most time and trouble to ‘bring up,’ so as to escape his censure. I learned from him that poetry, even that of the loftiest and, seemingly, that of the wildest odes, had a logic of its own, as severe as that of science; and more difficult, because more subtle, more complex, and dependent upon more and more fugitive causes. ‘In the truly great poets,’ he would say, ‘there is a reason assignable, not only for every word, but for the position of every word.’” — *Coleridge*.

“Of all our study the last end and aim should be to ascertain how a great writer or artist has served the life of man; to ascertain this, to bring home to ourselves as large a portion as may be of the gain wherewith he has enriched human life, and to render access to that store of wisdom, passion, and power, easier and surer for others. If our study does not directly or indirectly enrich the life of man, it is but a drawing of vanity with cart-ropes, a weariness to the flesh. or at best a busy idleness.” — *Edward Dowden*.



THE TEACHING OF POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

I

INTRODUCTORY

The problem

TEACHING poetry is everywhere essentially the same task. This side of the graduate school, at least, the ends to be attained are much the same in all grades of work. Special problems at each of the chief stages there are, of course; but the task is everywhere much the same; the differences are differences of emphasis, range, and scope.

In order to get the problem of teaching poetry in the high school fairly before us, let us take Frederick Oakes Sylvester's poem on the Mississippi River, and ask what we should do with it had we to "teach" it in the high school. The poem follows: —

“And do you love my river,
My stream of the tawny tones,
And do you find its world, indeed,
The rarest beauty owns?”

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

"Oh, I have seen it watch
To welcome home the dawn,
And I have seen its eyelids close
When the veil of night is drawn!

Yea, I have heard its laughter,
Have seen its glorious smile,
And I have felt it leap for joy
And shout for joy the while.

"What speed on wind-swept courses,
What races 'gainst the breeze!
What secret pauses, songs and dreams
Beneath Under the brooding trees!

"The hills clasp hands by its borders,
The forests sing by its side,
While the prairies that rival the ocean's realm
Surge round it far and wide.

"It is the blood of the vales and the valleys,
It is wine for flower and tree,
It is pulse of the plains, the meadows' veins,
And the land's great artery.

"I know you love my river —
God grant you know its worth;
For He made it fair beyond compare,
The king of the rivers of earth."¹

¹ Quoted by permission of my friend, the painter-poet, from his charming volume, *The Great River, Poems and Pictures*, Chicago, 1911 (privately printed). Second edition, 1913.

INTRODUCTORY

If you had this poem for class-study, what would you proceed to do? Would you, on completing the poem previously studied, "assign" this poem to be recited upon next day? If so, would you give out in advance some questions or suggest points for study? What kind of questions would you ask in the recitation period? Would you begin by reading the poem aloud to the class? Or would you have some member of the class read it? Would you begin somewhat as follows: "For to-day's lesson you were to be prepared on the poem, 'And do you love my river'"; then, reading the lines: —

"And do you love my river,
My stream of the tawny tones,"

ask, "What river is referred to?" "What is the meaning of 'tawny tones'?" — following up these questions with others of like character?

Or would you not "assign" the poem at all, but begin the study of it in class without having the students prepare upon it, without, indeed, their knowing even what they were going to read? If so, how would you begin? Would you say, "To-day we are to read together a poem about the Mississippi River"; then read the opening lines? Or would you, without previous assignment, and before the pupils knew what poem

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

was to be studied, ask such questions as these: "How many of you have ever seen the Mississippi River? If not, have you seen the Missouri River? What is the color of the water? Why? What are the shores like? Is its current swift or slow? Has it eddies? Is the river crooked or straight? Of what are the banks composed? Are there trees on the banks? Did you ever see the river at sunrise or sunset? What did it look like? Do you like to watch a river? What does it call up in your imagination? Does it make you wonder where it comes from, where it is going? Do you like to think of all the people who looked upon it in the years gone by? Do you like to think of all the many thousands who watch it now from day to day, and of all those who will do so in the years to come? Do you like to think of the homes, the towns, and the cities scattered along the river's banks? Did you ever 'love' a river?"¹

Then, having asked some such questions, the number and character of them having been determined by the situation before you, would

¹ Many of these questions are purposely so framed as to indicate the type of answer desired. Too many of them could be answered merely by "yes" or "no." For the type of questions more commonly to be employed in a class-exercise, see the practical work later.

INTRODUCTORY

you turn to the poem with a view to bringing the pupils into something of the poet's attitude and feeling? And what would be your aim — to give instruction, verbal, geographical, moral; to afford immediate pleasure and be satisfied with that; or, without attempting to produce actual pleasure, to make the poem merely a means toward the general improvement of taste and understanding?

A score of other questions might be proposed. Would you tell the pupils about the author's life? How much would you think it necessary to know, if this were the only poem of his to be read? Would you comment on verse and stanzaic form? Would you ask whether the poem were epic, lyric, or dramatic, and whether the poet apparently spoke from experience at first hand, or from observation, or from report and hearsay merely? How often would you think it necessary actually to read the poem in class? Would you, for example, first read the poem through without comment; follow this reading with a critical study in which all difficult, unusual, or striking phrases were dwelt upon sympathetically; and this reading with another reading unbroken by comment? Or would the one critical reading itself be sufficient? Would you have the pupils memo-

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

rise the poem? If so, before or after the "recitation"? Would you, incidentally or otherwise, seek to bring home to them in any special way the value and importance of studying and reading poetry? For examination purposes, what type of question would you ask? Do you think it is possible in the study of poetry to ask altogether satisfactory questions? What do you regard as a proper test of the pupil's understanding and appreciation of a poem?

Such questions as these, and many others, might be asked. The answer to some of them is obvious. The use of certain questions would, of course, commit a teacher to some kind of general method;¹ the use of others would signify a definite conception of ends to be attained through the study of poetry in the high school.

The present purpose

Directly or by implication, it is the task of the writer to answer these and like questions. Our specific purpose is to offer some practical aid to the teacher of poetry in the high school. There is no desire, much less attempt, to foist upon any one a final method of teaching poetry. The

¹ Cf. Stevens, *The Question as a Measure of Efficiency in Instruction*, published by Columbia University, New York, 1912.

INTRODUCTORY

writer has no such method, knows of none, believes that none can be devised. He offers no novel theory, no compendium of infallible rules; he has none and knows none. Each class with its distinctive personality, each poem with its subtle shades of thought and emotion, each individual class-situation faced by the teacher from hour to hour, creates conditions too complex by far to be provided for by any set method. It is only through an adroit use of knowledge and experience, the expression of personality, consistent good sense, and ready sympathy and tact, that success in such situations can be won. He who depends upon a formal method of teaching poetry is lost. He who attempts to follow slavishly what he finds other people doing and saying, as they teach poetry, is worse than lost. The best things contributed to the class-study of any poem are the things that are never said. They lie in the "background" of the teacher's life. They come to the wondering pupil as glimpses of that "undiscovered country" which seems to be inhabited by inviting truth, fine ideals, and inspiring action. Whoever teaches poetry with distinctive success has probably learned to do so chiefly through being well taught. Much he will have learned, too, through the actual experience.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

of teaching and by observing successful teachers. He who has been well taught is indeed fortunate; for if he is successful he will have mastered the elements of his art without ever knowing how, when, or where. But, should any teacher not have this advantage, he may still learn much by at least one other means — by visiting the classes of a successful teacher and observing how he does his work.

As far as is practicable on paper, the writer proposes to offer such an opportunity. Work conducted by a successful high-school teacher will be presented; and the general method, with its more important implications, will be discussed by the writer. In the teaching of poetry, more perhaps than in the teaching of any other subject, the personal factor looms large. In the high school it is the main factor. Methods are dead and hollow forms unless vitalized by personality. Much of this personal element must be lost, from the very nature of the printed page; yet the bold outlines of the work can be seen; here and there helpful suggestions may be caught.

The elements or factors involved

Before turning to the practical class-work, let us consider the elements or factors involved.

INTRODUCTORY

In teaching poetry, as in teaching other subjects, three elements or factors are involved: the teacher, the pupil, the subject-matter. Of these, the subject-matter is obviously the only one that distinctly marks off the problem from that of teaching any other subject; yet in teaching poetry there are special considerations affecting the teacher and the pupil which ought not to go unmentioned.

(1) *The teacher*: Of the qualifications essential to the successful teacher of poetry, the books on pedagogy contain reasonably satisfactory statements. It might here be emphasized, however, that for the teaching of poetry the primary qualification is a special talent which no artificial means can supply. That talent cannot be described, yet we know it when we find it. The secret of it seems to be imagination. He who possesses this talent instinctively puts himself in the pupil's place, catches his point of view, apprehends his difficulty, and uses the subject-matter in hand as the means of awakening and furthering his intellectual and emotional life. He thinks of the subject taught, not as something which the pupil is obliged by subtle devices of invitation and compulsion to master, but as a means, as rare as it is pleasurable, of stimulating,

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

broadening, and uplifting a relatively undeveloped personality. He knows that to bring the minds of his pupils under the influence of beauty is to bring them, more effectively than by any other means possible, under the reign of law. Though he deliberately aims at arousing and cultivating feeling, he is free from sentimentalism, because he insists that feeling shall always be connected with worthy ideas. He has a religion and is moral-minded, but he has n't a drop of missionary blood in his veins. He is the artist-teacher.

The possession of the special talent by which all this is chiefly effected is not all. In itself, it does not insure the highest success. A clear, defensible view of poetry; of how it came to be; of what it is in its essential nature; of what it has done and is still capable of doing for the life of man, individually and socially; of the need of it and its economic value in life; — in a word, a broad, philosophic conception of poetry, is equally indispensable. To love poetry, even to judge poetry with discrimination, is not enough. There must be a well-grounded conception of poetry as a whole. The true teacher must not only know what poetry has done for him; he must also see clearly how similar results may be

INTRODUCTORY

attained by others. Vagueness, confusion, intangibility, loss of time and energy in the classroom, are almost inevitable results of a teacher's lack of point of view.

Along with this well-grounded view of poetry should go still further equipment: a sound knowledge of the subject, both in its intellectual and its emotional aspects, and an ardent love for it; some acquaintance with other fields for comparison; a good command of idiomatic English; a voice well toned and modulated. All are indispensable to the highest success in teaching poetry in the high school. No teacher seriously lacking in any of these qualifications should continue to teach, without taking immediate steps to overcome the deficiency. Special talent cannot be acquired, but training is largely a matter of application and industry.

(2) *The pupil: (a) his general importance:* Important as the teacher is, he is still secondary to the pupil. No conception is more essential for the teacher at this stage than that the pupil, not himself, not even the subject which he teaches, is the objective point of all his endeavor. From school board and superintendent to humblest janitor, the entire organization exists for the sake of the pupil. For his benefit alone administrators

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

and teachers are trained, buildings erected, text-books written, methods of instruction devised. It is in order to free his mind from the bondage of a weak sensuousness, to effect through imagination an expansion of his inner life, to bring into full clearness his relation to the world, to prepare him to meet the needs of his time, and to deepen his capacity for enjoyment in its higher forms, and only for this reason, that we have made the pupil the center of this elaborate organization.

The pupil should never, of course, be made aware, much less told, of his importance. Egotism and impudence, intellectual flippancy and emotional perversion are the bitter fruits of error here. The pupil is important, not because of what he is and what he knows, but because of what he may become. Should he persistently refuse to submit himself to recognized means of developing his possibilities, he forfeits his right to the advantages of education and becomes an object for discipline.

Nor should the teacher err in attitude. To condemn a child for age, race, or previous condition of servitude is at once to break the bond. The pupil's training, his environment, his present lack of appreciation for poetry may be cause for regret, yet the pupil as he is presents a challenge

INTRODUCTORY

to the imaginative understanding, sympathy, and ability of the teacher. The immediate aims of the pupil, be they good or bad, high or low, depend entirely upon the *history of his inner life up to the present moment*. Between these aims and the poetry in hand, if only the poetry has been judiciously selected, there is always some connection possible, some point of attachment discoverable, some line of approach open. It is the teacher's task to discern this point of attachment, and to effect a union, in knowledge and ideals, between the pupil's aim and the content of the poem.

(b) *The pupil and the high-school stage:* The high school is preceded by the grade school.¹ In the grade school a broad choice is made. As between a greater good, represented by his studies, and a lesser good, represented by play or whatever else diverts from study, the average grade pupil chooses the greater good. Of the sum-total of his time and energy, he is now willing, he unconsciously says, to devote a part, even the main part, to the pursuit of things of the mind. He is not the "whining schoolboy" of the cynic Jacques, "creeping like snail unwillingly

¹ Cf. Hyde's *The Teacher's Philosophy in and out of School*.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

to school"; but often with joy and gladness, he goes to school, learns, studies.

In the high school a further and perhaps more significant choice is made. From a wide range of subjects, the pupil now elects the particular one that most appeals to him. Not the broad choice between work and play, but the particular selection of some one thing to pursue and work upon, is made. The high school period is the period of self-discovery. Here it is that individuality is born. Personality now asserts itself, indicates its affinities. Life-interests are awakened; aptitudes discovered; preferences proclaimed. Taste becomes assertive; vocations are selected; life-plans are shaped. Not "What does the pupil know?" but "What does he want?" is now the important question. "What one loves," says President Hyde, "is more important than what one knows; what one wants to do, and is interested in trying to do, is of more consequence at this stage than what one has done." At the high-school stage the pupil, and especially the pupil of more pronounced intellectual and emotional life, predestinates his career. Even the most stolid seldom, if ever, shakes entirely free from the subtle and quiet influences borne in upon his mind in this impressionable and forma-

INTRODUCTORY

tive period. In the high-school period every pupil is faced toward his career; some are even started.¹

(c) *Poetry and its relation to the pupil at the high-school stage:* In this process of selection and orientation which takes place in the high school, poetry plays an important part. Skillfully handled, no subject opens wider or more inviting opportunities to the pupil. Poetry is a transcript of life. It is a representation of life, not only as it is, but as it may and ought to be. From poetry the pupil may not only gain a refined and elevated pleasure; he may also learn, not only what life is, but what he himself is. Ignorance, not so much of subjects as of ourselves, is the fruitful source of error and of tragic waste in life. "Know thyself" was the admonition over the temple at Delphi, and to this practical end the Greeks themselves used poetry. To the same end the high school pupil may use poetry; through it he may come to some measure of self-knowledge.

¹ That the end sought or the plans conceived by the pupil are now self-centered and inherently selfish, that it is *his* plans and *his* success that alone concern the pupil, need not disturb the moralist. The selfishness is as naïve as it is unconscious and undeliberated. The world, if not the college, will take care of that; in some measure at least it will *socialize* his aims. The important thing now is that the pupil shall find what he wants to do; that he shall discover a purpose in life.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Aptitudes unknown because unrevealed; affinities too deep to be otherwise suspected; tendencies too secretly bestowed to have been hitherto recognized, will, through the revealing power of the skillful teacher, gradually unfold themselves to the wondering and admiring mind of the pupil. "Is that what it means?" "Is life like that?" "Are there really such people?" "There is a character just like me!" "I like that little poem" — almost day by day, in class or out, these and like expressions escape his lips. Poetry will help the high-school pupil to find his real self, to recognize his strength and discover his weaknesses. It will aid him in his choice of life-work, enable him to adapt himself to it, and give him a body of propelling and inspiring ideals that will help him to achieve the truest success.

(3) *The poetry*: The third element or factor is the subject-matter, the poetry. This is not the time to discuss this subject even in a general way.¹ One or two observations affecting our present purposes may, however, be made.

In order to teach anything, one should know what that thing is. In order to teach algebra, or physics, or geography, successfully, one must know what the subject-matter consists of, what

¹ See the writer's *The Making of Poetry*, Putnam's, 1912.

INTRODUCTORY

its limits are, its principles. And in teaching poetry it would appear to be an obvious requirement that we know what poetry is, that we be able to define it. But a serious difficulty arises here. One can define the subjects just named, but poetry falls into a different class. Poetry cannot be satisfactorily defined. From no definition yet framed, has any one ever gained an exact notion of what the essential nature of poetry is. The teacher of poetry, accordingly, finds himself in the anomalous position of having to deal with a subject of indefinite nature, with no apparent fixed limits, and no clearly established principles. Small wonder if he is bewildered by the range of his task! Yet, the true teacher of poetry does not complain about limitations; he rejoices in the range of his opportunities. His subject is not restricted as most subjects are; it touches life at many points, views it from many angles. And he gives token of his feeling by his manner of dealing with his subject-matter. If he cannot always point to a principle or a law to justify what he says and does, he knows that he can vindicate himself by results which are real, however intangible and secretly bestowed. He knows that he adds to the enjoyment of life, makes it sweeter, more wholesome, more endur-

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

able. In the teaching of poetry the character and range of the subject-matter offer peculiar difficulties, but these difficulties also represent rare opportunities for one who knows how to use them.

One distinction, however, will be of immediate help. This is the distinction between *fact* and *value*. If I say, "There is a tree," or "There is a man," I state a fact. If I say, "There is a beautiful tree," or, "That was a noble act," I indicate a value. This distinction between fact and value is of cardinal importance in the teaching of poetry; none is greater. Indeed, I do not hesitate to say that *all successful teaching of poetry in high school depends finally upon a recognition of the relative importance, in any poem, of these two elements, and upon the emphasis put upon them.*

Let me illustrate briefly. In the poem which I have quoted, there are certain matters of fact stated or implied. Is it a fact, for instance, that the Mississippi is a river of "tawny tones"? Are there "wind-swept courses," "races 'gainst the breeze," "secret pauses . . . under the brooding trees"? Do "the hills clasp hands by its borders," "the forests sing by its side," the prairies "surge round it far and wide"? Is it

INTRODUCTORY

“blood of the vales and the valleys,” “wine for flower and tree,” “pulse of the plains, the meadows’ veins, and the land’s great artery”?

These are indeed all matters of fact. Figuratively expressed, they can nevertheless be geographically confirmed; and no one can be said to have an intelligent understanding of the poem who has not mastered these matters of fact. But merely to master these facts, however thoroughly, is of course not to know the poem in its true sense. The poem has an element of value which is something more than the sum-total of its apprehended difficulties. This value can be known *only in and through feeling*. It cannot be stated, cannot be described. We speak of this experience as appreciating or enjoying the poem, and though that may mean different things to different people, it is none the less real. Here it is something of a renewed or an awakened love for the great river. After one has understood the language of the poem, and become master of the facts, one ought to enter into something of the writer’s feeling for the river. One must needs do so if one dwell sympathetically upon the poem. To find this joy of love for a great river, to make that love bear a close and vital relation to one’s life, is to come into possession of something of the “value” of

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

this poem. Poetry must rest upon fact, must in general be true to it and conform to it; but, in common with the other arts, it has as its great social function to unfold and reveal the permanent, significant, and indefectible "values" of life. The "value" element in a poem always represents that for which the poem was really written; all elements of fact, however novel, significant, or important they may be in themselves, are justifiable in a poem only through the "value" which they help to reveal. "To know is good. To feel is better," says Mr. Bliss Perry, "when it is a question of appropriating the form and meaning of a work of art."

An element of fact, and an element of value: herein lies the content of all poetry; herein lie the problems of the teaching of poetry! To drill on facts alone, while it will doubtless make for habits of accuracy and precision, is to kill the appreciation and enjoyment of poetry.¹ It is to get the letter and destroy the spirit. On the other hand, to ignore the facts and unduly emphasize

¹ Visiting a high-school class, on one occasion, where they were studying *Henry V*, the writer ventured to ask the class why they studied poetry. The brightest boy in the class, after a little reflection, made the interesting reply, "To get a knowledge of history." The answer was a definite indication of the teacher's method.

INTRODUCTORY

the feeling or value element in poetry is to engender habits of slovenliness and inaccuracy, and to throw the whole pursuit of poetry into an atmosphere of dilettantism and sentimentalism.

II

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

WITH these suggestions before us, we may turn to some practical work.¹

The poet selected was Robert Browning. The difficulties which beset the study of this author may perhaps not unfairly be regarded as a representative test of what may be accomplished under the method employed. The class was a senior class and had for some time been studying *Browning's Shorter Poems*. The poems were studied, not in the order in which they are printed in the text, but, as seems more advisable for younger students especially, according to the feelings, the ideas, and the conceptions revealed by the poems. Poems had been classified and read as follows: (1) Narrative Poems: *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*; "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix"; *Hervé Riel*; *Incident of the French Camp*; (2) Patriotic Poems: *Cavalier Tunes*; *Home-Thoughts, from the Sea*; *Home-*

¹ Conducted in the High School connected with the School of Education in the University of Missouri.

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

Thoughts, from Abroad; (3) Poems dealing with Italy: *The Italian in England*; *Up at a Villa — Down in the City*; *Love Among the Ruins*; “*De Gustibus —*”; (4) Personal: *My Star*; *Summum Bonum*; *Why I am a Liberal*; *The Lost Leader*; *Prospice*; *Epilogue to “Asolando”*; (5) Philosophical and Ethical: *My Last Duchess*; “*Childe Roland to the Dark Tower came*”; *Rabbi Ben Ezra*; *Saul*; *Songs from “Pippa Passes.”*

The next poem to be read was *Andrea del Sarto*. No previous assignment had been made, and the pupils came to class not knowing what poem would next be read. When the class was ready to begin, a stenographer came in and took the report which follows.¹

¹ This report has throughout been revised and edited by the writer. The purpose of this revision and editing has consistently been to bring out more clearly the method and aims involved in the actual teaching. Quite possibly some things have been eliminated and changed which a teacher experienced in high-school work would have left; yet the background of the study, which is here the essential thing, seems clear and evident. The importance of personality and those other qualities of character which inspire pupils in the teaching of poetry in the high school can scarcely be overemphasized; and yet it is entirely possible that a teacher with such qualifications may do little more, finally, than stir her pupils into a state of emotional froth. All teaching of poetry that is ultimately effective, that leaves its permanent impressions, must have a background of ideas, aims, and conceptions. These ideas, aims, and conceptions can never be satisfactorily stated, but they can be implied

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

- T. Last day we finished reading together the *Songs from "Pippa Passes."* Before we finally leave them, suppose you remind us who Pippa was and how she came to sing those songs.¹
- P. Pippa was a little silk-winder in the silk mills of Asolo. She is one of the most charming of Browning's characters that we have read about. As she passed in and out of the village on the one holiday of the year that she has, New Year's Day, she sang the songs that we read and, without knowing it, through them influenced the lives of people about her. The song which begins —

"The year's at the spring
And day's at the morn" —

awakened two wicked people to a sense of their guilt and of the divine government of the world. *Pippa Passes* is a drama, but from what you read us about it, not a drama like *Julius Cæsar*. It

and suggested by such an exercise as that which is here given. It was with this fact in mind that the writer eliminated some non-significant things and changed others in the class-report.

¹ The names of students called upon have been omitted in the report. The teacher explained that she consistently addressed all comprehensive questions first to the class as a whole, and then referred them to some particular student. To name a student before asking a question is often to lose at once much of the possible interest of the other members of the class. It should further be mentioned that incorrect answers, especially in the latter part of the report, have been eliminated as having no particular significance in this exercise. The absence of these answers, as well as the omission of the usual courtesies of replies by the students, need give no erroneous impression.

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

- gives a series of scenes, each of which represents a crisis in someone's life. Pippa sings her songs as she passes, but she does not know of the deep influence that they have upon the lives of people about her.
- T. Yes. Very good. To-day we shall begin to read together another poem; but before we do so there are some interesting things we ought to know. Do you remember that, when we studied the life of Browning,¹ we mentioned John Kenyon?
- P. Yes.
- T. Who was he?
- P. A friend of the Brownings.
- T. That is right. Yes?²
- P. Kenyon died in 1855 and left the Brownings a lot of money — £11,000 — just when they needed it.
- T. I am glad you remembered that. You will remember, too, that we often spoke of Florence. What is it?
- P. A city in Italy.
- T. That is correct. Will you please point it out for us on the map?³ (Student points it out on the map.)

¹ This had been done after the students had become interested in Browning, especially in connection with "Poems dealing with Italy."

² In response, as frequently, to another student who volunteered an answer.

³ It is well to have a map by for ready reference. Names of places mean little unless they are localized.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

T. For what, did we find, is this city now chiefly famous?

P. For its art. There are many fine paintings and buildings there.

T. That is right. One of the most famous buildings in Florence is the Pitti Palace (teacher writes name on board); and one of the best known paintings in the Pitti Palace is a portrait of a painter, Andrea del Sarto, and his wife. This print which I have here is a copy of the painting (teacher shows print to class).¹

An interesting story is connected with this painting. Kenyon asked Browning to buy him a copy of the portrait. None was to be had; so Browning wrote a poem, putting into it just what the painting had meant to him, and sent it to Kenyon. This poem is known as *Andrea del Sarto*, and is the next one that we shall read together. In writing this poem, Browning did not, however, depend solely upon his impressions from the painting. He made use of a book which is known as *Vasari's Lives of the Painters*. (Teacher writes name and title on the board.) Vasari has told in some detail the story of Andrea del Sarto and his wife. In writing his poem Browning has followed his account very closely. If you will listen attentively, I shall be glad to read to you some of the more important parts of the story as Vasari² tells it. (Teacher reads.)

¹ See frontispiece. ² Some parts follow the first edition.

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

“At length then we have come, after having written the lives of many artists who have been distinguished, some for colouring, some for design, and some for invention; we have come, I say, to that of the truly excellent Andrea del Sarto, in whom art and nature combined to show all that may be done in painting, when design, colouring, and invention unite in one and the same person. Had this master possessed a somewhat bolder and more elevated mind, had he been as much distinguished for higher qualifications as he was for genius and depth of judgment in the art he practised, he would beyond all doubt, have been without an equal. But there was a certain timidity of mind, a sort of diffidence and want of force in his nature, which rendered it impossible that those evidences of ardour and animation, which are proper to the more exalted character, should ever appear to him; nor did he at any time display one particle of that elevation which, could it but have been added to the advantages wherewith he was endowed, would have rendered him a truly divine painter: wherefore the works of Andrea are wanting in those ornaments of grandeur, richness, and force, which appear so conspicuously in those of many other masters. His figures are nevertheless well drawn, they are entirely free from errors, and perfect in all their proportions, and are for the most part simple and chaste.”

Vasari, after describing various paintings by Andrea, proceeds: —

“These various labours secured so great a name for Andrea in his native city, that among the many artists, old and young, who were then painting, he was accounted one of the best that handled pencil and colours. Our artist then found himself to be not only honoured and

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

admired, but also in a condition notwithstanding the really mean price that he accepted for his labours, which permitted him to render assistance to his family, while he still remained unoppressed for his own part, by those cares and anxieties which beset those who are compelled to live in poverty. . . .

“At that time there was a most beautiful girl in the Via di San Gallo, who was married to a cap-maker, and who, though born of a poor and vicious father, carried about her as much pride and haughtiness as beauty and fascination. She delighted in trapping the hearts of men, and among others ensnared the unlucky Andrea, whose immoderate love for her soon caused him to neglect the studies demanded by his art, and in great measure to discontinue the assistance which he had given to his parents.

“Now it chanced that a sudden and grievous illness seized the husband of this woman, who rose no more from his bed, but died thereon. Without taking counsel of his friends therefore; without regard to the dignity of his art or the consideration due to his genius, and to the eminence he had attained with so much labour; without a word, in short, to any of his kindred, Andrea took this Lucrezia di Baccio del Fede, such was the name of the woman, to be his wife; her beauty appearing to him to merit thus much at his hands, and his love for her having more influence over him than the glory and honour towards which he had begun to make such hopeful advances. But when this news became known in Florence, the respect and affection which his friends had previously borne to Andrea changed to contempt and disgust, since it appeared to them that the darkness of this disgrace had obscured for a time all the glory and renown attained by his talents.

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

“But he destroyed his own peace as well as estranged his friends by this act, seeing that he soon became jealous, and found that he had besides fallen into the hands of an artful woman, who made him do as she pleased in all things. He abandoned his own poor father and mother, for example, and adopted the father and sisters of his wife in their stead; insomuch that all who knew the facts, mourned over him, and he soon began to be as much avoided as he had previously been sought after. His disciples still remained with him, it is true, in the hope of learning something useful, yet there was not one of them, great or small, who was not maltreated by his wife, both by evil words and despiteful actions: none could escape her blows, but although Andrea lived in the midst of all that torment, he yet accounted it a high pleasure.”

In speaking of one of Andrea's paintings, Vasari says: —

“Beneath this group are two figures kneeling, one of whom, a Magdalen with most beautiful draperies, is the portrait of Andrea's wife, indeed he rarely painted the countenance of a woman in any place that he did not avail himself of the features of his wife; and if at any time he took his model from any other face, there was always a resemblance to hers in the painting, not only because he had this woman constantly before him and depicted her so frequently, but also, and what is still more, because he had her lineaments engraven on his heart; it thus happens that almost all his female heads have a certain something which recalls that of his wife. . . .

“While Andrea was thus labouring over these works in Florence, poorly remunerated for his toils, living in wretched poverty and wholly incapable of raising himself from his depressed condition, the two pictures which he

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

had sent into France were obtaining much admiration from King Francis, and among the many others which had been despatched to him from Rome, Venice, and Lombardy, these had been adjudged to be by far the best. That monarch, therefore, praising them very highly, was told that he might easily prevail on Andrea to visit France, when he might enter the service of His Majesty; this proposal was exceedingly agreeable to the king, who therefore gave orders that everything needful should be done for that purpose, and that a sum of money for the expenses of the journey should be paid to Andrea in Florence. The latter gladly set forth on his way to France accordingly, taking with him his scholar Andrea Sguazzella.

“Having in due time arrived at the French court, they were received by the monarch very amicably and with many favours, even the first day of his arrival was marked to Andrea by proofs of that magnanimous sovereign’s liberality and courtesy, since he at once received not only a present of money, but the added gift of very rich and honourable vestments. He soon afterwards commenced his labours, rendering himself so acceptable to the king as well as to the whole court, and receiving so many proofs of good-will from all, that his departure from his native country soon appeared to our artist to have conducted him from the extreme of wretchedness to the summit of felicity. . . .

“One day he received a letter, after having had many others, from Lucrezia his wife, whom he had left disconsolate for his departure, although she wanted for nothing. Andrea had even ordered a house to be built for them behind the Nunziata, giving her hopes that he might return at any moment; yet as she could not give money to her kindred and connections, as she had previously done,

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

she wrote with bitter complaints to Andrea, declaring that she never ceased to weep, and was in perpetual affliction at his absence; dressing all this up with sweet words, well calculated to move the heart of the luckless man, who loved her but too well, she drove the poor soul half out of his wits; above all, when he read her assurance that if he did not return speedily, he would certainly find her dead. Moved by all this, he resolved to resume his chain, and preferred a life of wretchedness with her to the ease around him, and to all the glory which his art must have secured to him. He was then, too, so richly provided with handsome vestments by the liberality of the king and his nobles, and found himself so magnificently arrayed, that every hour seemed a thousand years to him, until he could go to show himself in his bravery to his beautiful wife. Taking the money which the king confided to him for the purchase of pictures, statues, and other fine things, he set off, therefore, having first sworn on the gospels to return in a few months. Arrived happily in Florence, he lived joyously with his wife for some time, making large presents to her father and sisters, but doing nothing for his own parents, whom he would not even see, and who, at the end of a certain period, ended their lives in great poverty and misery. . . .

“He was nevertheless determined to return to France, but the prayers and tears of his wife had more power than his own necessities, or the faith which he had pledged to the king; he remained therefore in Florence, and the French monarch was so greatly angered thereby, that for a long time after he would not look at the paintings of Florentine masters, and declared that if Andrea ever fell into his hands he would have no regard whatever to the distinction of his endowments, but would do him more harm than he had before done him good. Andrea del

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Sarto remained in Florence, therefore, as we have said, and from a highly eminent position he sank to the very lowest, procuring a livelihood and passing his time as he best might."

It is interesting to note that Vasari was at one time Andrea's pupil, and that he published his *Lives of the Painters* while Andrea's widow was still in Florence. Recent investigation has failed to produce any evidence whatever in support of the charge of embezzlement made by Vasari against Andrea. The charge is now generally discredited. We are now ready to begin reading together Browning's poem, *Andrea del Sarto*. Please open your books at page 149.

First, tell me something about the title.

P. It's a man's name.

T. What nationality do you know this man to be?

P. Italian.

T. Now, what do you think Andrea might mean in English? — Is there an English name which this name suggests to you?

P. Andrew.¹

T. Yes. Now what do you think "Sarto" might mean? (No reply.) Have you ever seen the word "Sartor" anywhere?

P. Yes. Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*.

T. Do you know what that title means?

P. No.

T. Well, it means "the tailor re-tailored." Carlyle's

¹ A boy by the name of Andrew answered, and the class enjoyed a moment's humor.

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

Sartor Resartus is a book which you ought to read sometime later — put it on your list. The main idea of this book is that the world wears clothes; that to most men it is full of deceiving shows and confusing appearances, but to the man who can see through these shows and appearances, who penetrates to their deeper meaning, it is a world full of revelation, one which reveals a vital principle. Yes, *Sartor Resartus* means the tailor re-tailored. Italian came from Latin. What evidently does the Italian word “Sarto” mean?

- P. Tailor.
- T. What would “del” mean?
- P. Probably “the.”
- T. Then what would the full title “Andrea del Sarto” mean?
- P. Andrew the tailor.
- T. Was he a tailor?
- P. No. We know from what you read us that he was a painter.
- T. How, then, do you suppose he would come to have such a name?
- P. Probably his father was a tailor.
- T. Yes. The title means literally, “Andrew of the tailor.” We might say, “the tailor’s Andrew,” for Andrea del Sarto. What, then, do we know of Andrea del Sarto?
- P. We know his name, his nationality, his father’s occupation, and his own.
- T. (Reads) “Called the Faultless Painter.” What does that mean?

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

- P. That he is perfect.
- T. Does faultless mean perfect?
- P. I don't know — I don't believe so. You might not be able to find fault with a thing even if it were not perfect. Take a brick; it might be faultless but not perfect for a certain piece of work; it might not be the right color.¹
- T. Yes. Now, Andrea is called the faultless painter. In what sense do you think he could be a faultless painter, yet not a perfect painter?
- P. His painting might be faultless in outline but the faces not have the right expression.
- T. In other words, in what respect would it be perfect?
- P. Perfect in all mechanical parts.
- T. A better word than mechanical —
- P. Technique.
- T. Very good. This painter, then, is perfect in technique. We might say, in the mechanics of painting. Why are the words "The Faultless Painter" in quotation marks?
- P. Because that's what they called him then.

¹ In effective teaching, as much is accomplished by what is omitted as by what is actually done. Again and again the teacher of poetry must exercise judgment and decide immediately whether a point in a particular answer is worth following up or not. A poor parallel or figure, if far pursued, will only divert the minds of pupils and possibly lead them down a blind alley. The illustrations that truly illustrate, that is, throw light upon, are the only ones worth pursuing. In this case the teacher evidently thought it inadvisable to follow up the figure.

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

T. Yes. Let me read to you what Symonds says about this point:

“The Italians called him *Il pittore senza errori*, or ‘the faultless painter.’ What they meant by this must have been that, in all the technical requirements of art, in drawing, composition, handling of fresco and oils, disposition of draperies, and feeling for light and shadow, he was above criticism. As a colourist he went further and produced more beautiful effects than any Florentine before him. His silver grey harmonies and liquid blendings of cool yet lustrous hues have a charm peculiar to himself alone. We find the like nowhere else in Italy. And yet Andrea cannot take rank amongst the greatest Renaissance painters. What he lacked was precisely the most precious gift — inspiration, depth of emotion, energy of thought.”

T. Do we know Andrea’s time yet?

P. Well, it was the time of the Renaissance.

T. When was that?

P. About the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries.

T. Yes, that will do. Andrea del Sarto was born about 1486 and died in 1531. Let us now read together some of the opening lines of the poem: —

“But do not let us quarrel any more,
No, my Lucrezia! bear with me for once:
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish.
You turn your face, but does it bring your heart?
I’ll work then for your friend’s friend, never fear, 5
Treat his own subject after his own way,
Fix his own time, accept too his own price,
And shut the money into this small hand

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?
Oh, I'll content him — but to-morrow, Love! 10
I often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual: and it seems
As if — forgive now — should you let me sit
Here by the window, with your hand in mine,
And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole, 15
Both of one mind, as married people use,
Quietly, quietly the evening through,
I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try.
To-morrow, how you shall be glad for this! 20

T. (Reads again): —

“But do not let us quarrel any more,
No, my Lucrezia! bear with me for once:”

T. How many characters are there?

P. Two.

T. Who are they?

P. Andrea del Sarto and Lucrezia, his wife. }

T. Where are they?

P. Evidently in the studio.

P. Near the window. See line 14.¹

P. They are standing.

T. Yes. Andrea and his wife appear to be standing in the studio near the window. And what has happened before the opening of the poem?

¹ The readiness of such answers may impress the reader as somewhat unreal. To indicate the pauses and moments of delay, when students are doing their thinking, is, of course, not possible in a report of this kind, even if it were desirable. In this case, it should be noted, the teacher had the faculty of keeping her class keyed-up; moreover, she had had her students in training for some time.

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

- P. They have had a quarrel.
- T. In what mood is Andrea now?
- P. Well, he is not in a good humor. The first two lines are appealing.
- T. What other adjective could you use to show his attitude toward her?
- P. He is very gentle with her.
- T. What words show it?
- P. "My Lucrezia! bear with me for once:
Sit down and all shall happen as you wish."
- T. Yes. The first touch, "*bear with me for once*," indicates a rather timid, apologetic attitude on the part of Andrea. We know from Vasari that, whatever his faults, Andrea is a better husband than Lucrezia is a wife. His yielding is therefore a mark of weakness. Now, what is it that she asks?
- P. That he shall paint a picture for her friend's friend.
- T. Yes. In the painting, you see, Lucrezia holds in her hand the letter which probably requests this. (Reads): "You turn your face, but does it bring your heart?" Now, just what is in Andrea's mind when he says, "You turn your face"?
- P. I don't know.
- T. Does he doubt her love for him?
- P. Yes, I believe so.
- T. Now, what does "but does it bring your heart" signify?
- P. He longs for her sympathy.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

- T. I wonder if he is likely to get it? What about the expression on her face? (Referring to print.)
- P. It is cold.
- P. I don't like her.
- P. She looks determined.
- T. Yes; that is good. (Reads): —

"I'll work then for your friend's friend, never fear,
Treat his own subject after his own way,
Fix his own time, accept too his own price,
And shut the money into this small hand
When next it takes mine."

Why say her friend's friend? Why not have him say that he will work for her friend?

- P. It is more of a sacrifice for him to work for her friend's friend.
- P. Andrea would know Lucrezia's friends, but he would n't likely know her friend's friends.
- T. Yes.
- P. It makes it more remote. He is not going to favor one of his own friends by painting a picture for him; he is n't even going to paint one for his wife's friend, but for a friend of his wife's friend.
- T. Yes. (Reads): —

"Treat his own subject after his own way."

What does he mean when he says, "Treat his own subject"?

- P. Treat some subject chosen by the friend. |
- T. "After his own way"?
- P. Well, probably the friend does n't want it just the way Andrea would likely do it. So Andrea says

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

he'll do it any way to suit the friend. He sells himself just to please Lucrezia.

T. Yes. Lucrezia has been teasing her husband to paint a picture for her friend's friend. He did n't want to do it, and the quarrel referred to in line one had evidently been over the painting of this picture. Now he gives in, for the sake of peace. He accepts the subject though he apparently does n't like it, and he even says he will treat it as the friend wants him to. Yes, he *does* sell himself just to please Lucrezia. Is he likely to paint a good picture under these conditions?

P. No. I don't think he is.

T. Why?

P. I think a man does really good work only when he is happy. Andrea is n't happy; so I don't see how he could put much life or joy into his painting.

P. He sells himself, gives up his ideals; he is n't true to his art. He gives up his ambition for the sake of Lucrezia, and just to make some money for her.

P. Andrea does n't want to paint the picture at all. He is going to do it only so that he may give Lucrezia some money. Wordsworth wrote *The Green Linnet* that we read only because he wanted to; and I don't believe a painter could paint a good picture unless he felt like doing it.

T. Yes. That is all very good. We know from other sources that Andrea gave promise of being a very great painter. He might even have rivalled Raphael. But he was led on by his selfish and

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

ignoble wife; he gave himself up to her and lowered his ideals; he fell into a sort of "cold correctness," that is why he is called the "faultless painter." In all his later work there is just one type — his wife. I agree with you, and think it is not possible for any one to do really good work unless he enjoys doing it; and that is especially true of poets, painters, and other artists. (Reads): —

"And shut the money into this small hand."

What does this line suggest with regard to Lucrezia?

- P. That she has small, beautiful hands.
- P. He almost says so in line 21.
- T. Yes. And if you will look at line 26 you will see that he calls Lucrezia his "serpentine beauty." Why does Andrea give in to Lucrezia in everything and beg her not to quarrel any more?
- P. Because he wants to be with her.
- T. But *why* does he? She is quarrelsome and asking him to do what he does n't want to do.
- P. Because she is beautiful.
- T. Yes. He is infatuated with her beauty. Andrea loves her not so much as her husband, perhaps, as he does as an artist. Is there anything else suggested? Anything about her character?
- P. That she loves money. I think the word "shut" shows that.
- T. Yes. That is a good suggestion. (Reads): —

"When next it takes mine. Will it? tenderly?"

What does he show here?

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

- P. He wants sympathy.
- P. He wants her company.
- T. Yes. Andrea wants to have Lucrezia by him because she is so beautiful in his eyes, but above all he seems to yearn for some interest on her part, some sympathy with him and what he would like to do. Does he get it now?
- P. No. She does n't even give him her hand after he has promised to give her the money he makes from painting the picture.
- T. I don't wonder that he says, "tenderly." Do you remember that Vasari says that "none could escape her blows"? Evidently this little, beautiful hand that Andrea worshiped so was capable of cruel blows. He longs to have it given to him *tenderly*. (Reads): "Oh, I'll content him." Why does he say this? (No answer.) Does n't Andrea break in rather quickly with that? Why should he say suddenly, "Oh, I'll content him"?
- P. Well, I suppose Lucrezia did something.
- T. What do you think she probably did? What *had* they been doing?
- P. They had been quarreling.
- T. Well, then?
- P. I suppose Lucrezia was annoyed with Andrea's pleading with her, and she looked as if she were going to begin to quarrel again.
- T. Why should she want to resume the quarrel? Had n't Andrea promised to do everything she asked, and just as she wanted it?
- P. I think so.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

- T. What about that expression, "but to-morrow, Love!" What does that refer to?
- P. Oh, I see. Lucrezia wants him to begin the painting that very day. Andrea wants to sit and talk with her and worship her beauty.
- P. I can imagine I hear Lucrezia say, "I want you to begin this *right now*." I don't like her.
- T. I can sympathize with that feeling; and I am glad you can see and hear Lucrezia so vividly in imagination that you can guess what she would probably say. That is all good. (Reads):—

"I often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual: and it seems
As if — forgive now — should you let me sit
Here by the window, with your hand in mine, 15
And look a half-hour forth on Fiesole,
Both of one mind, as married people use,
Quietly, quietly the evening through,
I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever. Let us try."

(Repeats): —

"I often am much wearier than you think,
This evening more than usual."

Why does Andrea mention this?

- P. He wants to get her sympathy because he is tired.
- T. Does he get it?
- P. No. She's as hard as a nut. \
- P. There's no sympathy between them; at least Lucrezia has none for Andrea. /
- T. (Reads): —

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

“and it seems

As if — forgive now — should you let me sit
Here by the window, with your hand in mine.”

Why does he say, “forgive now”?

- P. I guess he's afraid.
- P. Andrea is making a dangerous proposition. He's feeling his way.
- P. She seems to be boss; Andrea has to ask permission to sit by the window with her.
- T. Yes. Lucrezia does n't seem to care anything at all about Andrea. She does n't care to have him show any affection for her at all. He is afraid she will take up the quarrel again, but he wants to sit there and enjoy the evening with her. Even a half-hour would be something. (Reads): “And look a half-hour on . . .” Who can pronounce this name? (No reply.) (Teacher writes it on the board and then indicates the pronunciation Fe-â-so-le.) Can any one point it out on the map? (After a little searching, a student points it out.) Yes. Fiesole is a little town that crowns one of the hills to the north of Florence, about three miles away. If you ever visit Italy, you will find it to be a very picturesque little place.¹ (Reads): “Both of one mind.” Were they usually that?
- P. No. They seem to spend a good deal of their time quarreling.
- P. There is no sympathy between them.

¹ The teacher had visited Italy.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

- T. (Reads): "As married people use"; what does he mean by that?
- P. Are used to do.
- T. Perhaps better, "ought" or, "are wont to do."
(Reads): "Quietly, quietly the evening through."
Why, do you think, is "quietly" repeated?
- P. Because Andrea longs for peace. He hates to quarrel, and he wants a quiet evening for once.
- T. Yes. I think that is right; "quietly" is repeated for the sake of emphasis. I suppose Andrea did not have many quiet evenings, certainly not with Lucrezia sitting pleasantly by him. Andrea would like to sit this evening with Lucrezia and look out upon Fiesole. He is an artist and would enjoy her beauty and the beauty of the scene. Class, with whom is your sympathy so far?
- Class. (In unison). With Andrea!
- T. (Reads): —

"I might get up to-morrow to my work
Cheerful and fresh as ever."

What do these lines show?

- P. That he usually does n't get up cheerful.
- T. How does he usually get up?
- P. Cross, I guess.
- T. Yes. I suppose so. He says, "fresh," too; what does he mean by that?
- P. Well, he does n't take any interest in his work any more, because Lucrezia does n't take any interest in him or his work.
- T. I think that is true. Andrea lost his ambition,

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

his hopes, his ideals because he enslaved himself to Lucrezia, and she apparently did not care for him at all. But there is something else; he says, "as ever"; what does that signify?

P. That he *used to be* cheerful and feel fresh for his work.

T. Yes. (Reads): "Let us try." There Andrea pleads again; there's the yearning for sympathy and companionship that we saw a while ago.

(Reads): —

"To-morrow, how you shall be glad for this!"

Why does he say that?

P. I don't quite see.

T. Well, if Lucrezia does as Andrea wants her to now, what will he probably do for her to-morrow?

P. I suppose he will work all the better for her."

T. Yes. Notice that Andrea goes on to speak of Lucrezia's soft hand. She has apparently acceded to his request. They probably sit down and Lucrezia gives Andrea her hand. Browning implies that this action takes place, but he does not tell us. Where have we seen him do this sort of thing before — action implied by the poet as taking place, but no definite statement?

P. In *My Last Duchess*, just at the close.

T. Quite right. (Reads): —

"Don't count the time lost, neither; you must serve
For each of the five pictures we require:
It saves a model."

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Why does Andrea mention this? (No reply.)
Does Lucrezia seem to resent it?

P. No.

T. I may be wrong, but I imagine the friend referred to wanted a painting of Lucrezia, — see line 236. Of course he does say, "Treat his own subject," but it is just possible that Andrea is trying to persuade Lucrezia to consent to being the model for other paintings because he has consented to paint a portrait of her for a friend's friend. He says, "Finish the portrait out of hand." Why does he say, "It saves a model"? (No reply.)
Would Andrea have to pay a model?

P. Yes.

T. Well, then?

P. Lucrezia likes money, and if she serves as a model she probably can have the money that would have been paid to a model.

T. What adjective do we apply to a person who likes money for its own sake?

P. A money-lover.

T. But I said, "what adjective"?

P. Mercenary.

T. Do you think Andrea may have any other reason than saving money for asking Lucrezia to serve as a model? (No reply.) Well, did he like to look at Lucrezia? Was n't she beautiful?

P. Yes. He probably wanted her to be near him, and this was a good excuse.

T. Yes. Andrea wants Lucrezia near him, but he

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

appeals to the mercenary side of her nature in order to persuade her. (Reads): —

“So! keep looking so —
My serpentining beauty, rounds on rounds!”

Why should he call her “*serpentining* beauty”? What do you think he might mean by “*serpentining* beauty,” and “rounds on rounds”? (No reply.) Well, turn for a moment to lines 175-6.

P. (Reads): —

“Let my hands frame your face in your hair’s gold,
You beautiful Lucrezia that are mine!”

He is speaking of her hair; it is golden and put up in coils; “*serpentining*” and “rounds on rounds” evidently refer to Lucrezia’s hair.

T. Yes. (Reads): —

“How could you ever prick those perfect ears,
Even to put the pearl there! oh, so sweet —
My face, my moon, my everybody’s moon,
Which everybody looks on and calls his, 30
And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
While she looks — no one’s:”

Yes. Lucrezia is evidently beautiful. What do you think Andrea means when he calls Lucrezia “my moon, my everybody’s moon”? (No reply.) Well, look at the face in the picture.

P. It is round, like the moon.

T. Yes. I think that is the idea. Line 26 also carries some suggestion of roundness of the face. One other possible explanation is that it refers to the effect that Lucrezia has on Andrea, affecting him

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

in her moods, one of which she is in now, as the moon affects the tides. It may be something of the same idea that Tennyson had in his *Dream of Fair Women* where he describes Cleopatra: —

“Once, like the moon, I made
The ever-shifting currents of the blood
According to my humour ebb and flow.”

Now, what is it, evidently, about Lucrezia that has taken hold upon Andrea?

P. Her beauty.

T. Yes. Does he speak of her qualities of character?

P. No. He speaks of her beautiful hair, her pretty ear, and so on.

T. Yes. That is very interesting. Andrea is evidently won by the physical beauty of Lucrezia. He has a sort of physical point of view. He is content with the loveliness of physical things. He does n't seem to care so much about Lucrezia's character. In fact, he has shown no indignation that his wife has a lover, as she apparently has. He is indifferent to that. He is content if only she will sit by him. She is beautiful. He wants her by him for that reason only. Then he may admire her hair, her pretty ear, her beautiful face. (Reads): “While she looks — no one's.” What does he mean by that? (No reply.) Does n't it tell us something of her response to the admiration she receives?

P. Yes, I believe so.

T. Well, then, what is it?

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

- P. She is cold.
- T. Yes. (Reads): "no one's." Did she not belong to her husband?
- P. Certainly.
- T. But from what Andrea says, she acted as if she belonged to *no one at all*. That, I think, is what he means. She is cold in temperament and utterly selfish. She is beautiful but soulless. Look at the picture again. Think of some kind and generous person, and tell me if you find anything like that person's expression in this face.
- P. No. It is cold.
- P. There is no smile.
- P. She is n't even looking at him.
- P. It is too hard to be kind.
- T. Yes. I think you are right. Lucrezia is a self-centered beauty. She is not only cold and indifferent to her husband but incapable of any kind of strong feeling for anybody or anything. She has no heart. She is utterly selfish. Can any one tell me where there is a character in an author, some of whose works we have read, that is of the same type? (No reply.) What about Rosamond Vincy in *Middlemarch*?
- P. Yes. I've read it. She's the same sort.
- T. (Reads): "Very dear, *no less*." What does he mean by that?
- P. He knows she has n't any heart, but she is still very dear to him.
- T. Yes. That is an interesting point. Why is she very dear to him?

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

- P. Because she is beautiful.
- T. Has he said anything about her mind or character?
- P. No. She does n't seem to have much of either.
- T. Quite true. It seems, then, does n't it, that Andrea knows well enough that he is bound to Lucrezia by her beauty only, but lacks the will power to break away from her. From Vasari we know that Andrea lowered his ideals — look at line 39, where Andrea practically says so — and that he is conscious of his degradation and failure. Still Lucrezia is “very dear, no less.” Then he says, “You smile?” Why should Lucrezia smile? (No reply.) Well, has he not just said she is *very dear* to him?
- P. Yes.
- T. And has he not also said she “looks — no one’s,” not even his, as we have seen?
- P. Yes.
- T. Well, from what we know about the cause of the quarrel and all, do you see no reason why Lucrezia might smile?
- P. (After a pause).¹ I guess she thought he was a kind of fool. He seems to be foolish about her just because she is pretty, yet he knows she must have lovers. One of them wants her to get him to paint a picture. And he is going to do it. He will do anything for her if she will sit by him and let him hold her hand. He strikes me as pretty soft.

¹ Where the pauses are noted, the teacher allowed a special amount of time for the pupil to work out the idea.

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

T. Yes. I think you have the right idea. We might phrase it a little better. Andrea seems to think that Lucrezia is indifferent to *everybody*. She looks — no one's, he says. *She* knows she is *not* altogether indifferent; she has a lover, and she smiles a cynical smile as she thinks how Andrea is deceived. (Reads): —

“Why, there's my picture ready made,
There's what we painters call our harmony!”

How does Andrea regard her smile?

P. He only sees how pretty she looks.

T. Does he suspect what is going on in her mind?

P. No. He sees only how pretty she looks when she smiles.

T. Yes.

P. Andrea strikes me as a plumb fool.²

T. I think you are right. I believe that is part of the idea that Browning wishes to bring out in the poem, though it would be best to express the idea in better language. Andrea is lured on by Lucrezia; he is finally ruined, as artist and as man, by her fatal beauty and soulless heart. Lucrezia here smiles a cynical smile; she knows she is deceiving him, but Andrea thinks it is a smile of pleasure at his praise of her beauty. Will you

² It is when pupils become strongly interested in character that they are especially likely to express themselves in colloquial form. The teacher should stimulate the pupil to express the same idea in better language, without doing or saying anything to dull the interest or repress spontaneous expression of opinion.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

please read to the middle of line 49, beginning with "A common grayness."

P. (Reads):—

"A common grayness silvers everything — 35
All in a twilight, you and I alike
— You, at the point of your first pride in me
(That's gone, you know) — but I, at every point;
My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned down
To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole. 40
There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top;
That length of convent-wall across the way
Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside;
The last monk leaves the garden; days decrease,
And autumn grows, autumn in everything. 45
Eh? the whole seems to fall into a shape,
As if I saw alike my work and self
And all that I was born to be and do,
A twilight-piece."

T. Thank you. Let us look at this passage together for a little. What is the dominant tone of these lines?

P. Sad.

P. Mournful.

P. Melancholy.

P. Disappointment.

P. Hopeless.

T. Yes. I think we might apply Andrea's own words to this passage: it is "a twilight-piece." The tone is, as has been suggested, that of melancholy, hopeless resignation. The sadness of autumn, and especially of autumn twilight, has crept over the mind of Andrea and the scene upon which he is looking. How do you think Browning produces

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

this tone? You will remember that we have seen that adjectives and verbs¹ are especially important in poetry.

P. He uses "silvers," "toned down," "sober," "clinking," "huddled," "last monk," "leaves," "decrease," "twilight." All these words give a common tone to the piece.

T. Yes. Very good. And that tone belongs to what?

P. To the scene.

P. Yes, and to Andrea's mind, too. He's sad. He says himself that he sees his work and himself as a sort of twilight-piece.

T. Yes. How about the language?

P. I like it.

T. But why?

¹ The attention of pupils had previously been drawn to this fact. It had, moreover, been connected in a practical way with their work in composition. Pupils had been advised, as a means of giving force and virility to their writing: "Put your main ideas in your verbs." They had become quick to see and feel the difference, for example, between such expressions as, "I have great hopes," and, "I hope great things"; between, "My understanding of your proposition," etc., and, "I understand you to propose that," etc. The attention of those who knew some Latin was drawn to the fact that much of the effectiveness of Latin prose is due to the fact that Latin expresses its main ideas through the verbs, and that there is a very small percentage of abstract nouns. A very great deal can be done incidentally by the skillful teacher to offset the common student-notion that, because subjects are separated in the curriculum, they are separated in reality. Especially likely are pupils to think that poetry has little connection with anything else, particularly anything that is of a practical character.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

- P. It is musical. I like that "There's the bell clinking from the chapel-top." I once lived near a chapel, and I think "clink," is a good word to describe the sound of the bell.
- T. Very good. I think you are right in saying that the language is musical. Notice the slow movement of that line, "The last monk leaves the garden; days decrease"; it seems almost to drag; you can't read it rapidly. The language is not only musical; it is of the same tone as Andrea's mind and the scene upon which he is looking. Browning has, I think, produced a fine *harmony* in these lines; they combine into a perfect unity: — the mood of Andrea, the tone-quality of the scene described, and the music of the verse are very successfully blended together. Browning is often charged with being rugged in his verse, but the charge cannot be borne out here. Tell me now, please,¹ what Andrea means when he says: —

“— You, at the point of your first pride in me
(That's gone, you know) — but I, at every point.”

- P. I think he means that Lucrezia has lost only her first pride in her husband.
- T. Yes.
- P. Andrea has lost everything: his youth, his hope and ambition, his art.
- T. Yes. All his youthful hopes and ambitions, all his

¹ The teacher's manner and address just here showed that she shared in and responded to the evident "mood" of the class. These are rare opportunities and sacred moments.

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

fine aspirations have passed away. He is already in the evening of his life. He feels it and says it. Please comment on the line: —

“Holds the trees safer, huddled more inside.”

Do you get any suggestion from “Holds safer” and “huddled”?

- P. The convent wall suggests protection for the trees, and they seem to gather together, as if they felt the protection.
- T. Yes. Some one has said that we find in things just what we bring. Is this true of Andrea here?
- P. Yes, I think it somehow seems like Andrea.
- T. Where do you naturally think of a great, strong tree's being? Behind a wall or out in the open?
- P. In the open; probably in a forest.
- T. Yes. Do trees grow well when they are huddled together?
- P. No. They need room and air and sunshine.
- T. But they are *safer* behind the convent wall.
- P. Yes, I suppose they are safer, but they can't grow as well.
- T. True. Now if Andrea finds in the scene before him something that seems to fit into his own life, what do you think it is? Is there anything in his own life that corresponds to the trees' being behind the wall, “safer” and “huddled” for protection?
- P. Well, Andrea says he has given up his hopes and everything. He ain't living in the world any more, like the tree in the forest.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

T. Yes. Of course you meant to say, "He is n't living in the world any more."

P. Yes.

T. Now will some one state clearly for us the parallel that Andrea implies.

P. The trees are huddled inside the convent wall. They are safer, but they have n't room to grow. Andrea feels safe in his own home, and happy if only he has Lucrezia with him, but he feels that he might have grown, might have become a Raphael even, if he had lived his life in the world.

T. Yes. Very good. I think that is just the point. Andrea gives up to this seclusion, and to painting pictures for Lucrezia's friend's friends, just to be with Lucrezia, who has exerted an unfortunate fascination over him. He regrets his lost opportunities, his possibilities for inspiration, growth, and development that would doubtless have come to him if he had lived his life among men. He seems to know perfectly well what Lucrezia has meant to him, but he seems to think he is powerless to shake himself free from her influence. Worst of all, he seems now to be *content to remain so*. (Reads): —

" . . . Love, we are in God's hand.
How strange now, looks the life he makes us lead; so
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!
I feel he laid the fetter: let it lie!"

What light do these lines throw on Andrea's character?

P. They show us something of his religion.

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

- T. Yes. What is that something?
P. Well, he thinks God controls everything.
T. What is the tone? Is Andrea happy in that thought?
P. No. I think he is bitter. He says we are "fettered."
T. What else does he say?
P. That God "makes" us lead a certain life; that He "laid the fetter."
T. Good. Now, do you think Andrea is sincere in this? Does he really believe what he says?
P. No. I don't think so. He knew that he could have done something if he had really wanted to.
T. Where does he put the responsibility for his not having done anything?
P. On God.
T. But he knows that he is himself responsible?
P. Yes.
T. What kind of religion do you call that?
P. (After several incorrect replies) Fatalism.
T. Yes. Andrea is a fatalist; not a very sincere fatalist, I think, but still a fatalist. Fatalism, the doctrine that everything is fixed by Fate, that man's will has no determining power, the doctrine that makes people blame God or one's people or society, is often the refuge of weak characters like Andrea. Notice how Andrea half excuses himself when he says "let it lie," by showing a willingness to submit. He really contradicts himself when he says that, because he implies that he *could* remove the fetter if he really wanted to. You remember

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

that Hamlet did the same kind of thing toward the close of the play. Can any one quote lines showing that?

- P. "There 's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will."
- T. Yes. Very good, indeed. We all tend, in our moments of weakness, to put the burden of our faults on God or fate or circumstances or other people. Often, when we don't get along well at school we blame the school, when the fault lies with ourselves. I wonder if any one can tell me what makes us do this?
- P. We give up.
- P. We quit trying.
- T. Well, what is the matter when we quit trying?
- P. Maybe we're tired.
- T. Yes. That happens sometimes. But when we quit trying altogether, not just at the times when we are tired?
- P. I suppose we get lazy.
- T. Just the point precisely. The real trouble with Andrea here is that he is lazy. The real trouble with us when we *cease to try* is that we become lazy. Andrea gives himself up to a pleasant, sensuous love for Lucrezia. He enjoys that; quits his work; gives up his ambitions; lets things go; blames God; tries to convince himself that *God* is at fault. He thinks he excuses himself because he is willing to have things as they are. The root of all evil is not money but laziness. Andrea's

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

supposed fatalism is the religion of a man who gives up ambition and effort for the sake of the sensuous beauty of his wife Lucrezia. This is what she has brought him to. We shall see, before we get through with our study, that the poem reveals for us the conflict between Andrea's art and his infatuation with a beautiful but heartless and wicked woman. We know now something of the effect upon his work; we shall soon see more clearly what the effect was upon his character.

And thus the lesson continued.¹ Five minutes before the close of the hour the assignment for the next day's recitation and study was given:

For to-morrow: (1) Tabulate, with line references, the characteristics of Andrea del Sarto that you have learned so far; (2) tabulate, with line references, the characteristics of Lucrezia; (3) read in the encyclopædias under Fiesole, Florence, and Andrea del Sarto.²

On the following day, a review of the work of the preceding day was naturally first taken up.

T. What do you know of this poem from the title and from the parenthesis?

P. From the title we know that this is a poem about

¹ The actual class-hour has been disregarded in order to bring the exercise to what seemed to be a significant breaking point.

² Pupils had become familiar with Burdœ's *Browning Cyclopædia* and similar books.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Andrea del Sarto, an Italian, the son of a tailor. From the parenthesis we know that he was considered by his contemporaries a faultless painter — that is, faultless in technique.

- T. What characteristics of the man do you learn from the lines we read yesterday?
- P. Tenderness toward Lucrezia.....line 3
Forbearance.....line 5
Craving for sympathy.....lines 12-19
Love of physical beauty.....lines 26-29
Melancholy.....line 35
Lost ambition.....lines 39-40
Resignation, Fatalism.....lines 49-52
Lack of will.....lines 59-61
Genius.....lines 70-71
- T. Do you agree with all the terminology?
- P. I think line five expresses more his sympathy or his love for his wife than his forbearance.
- P. I think those lines show weakness.
- P. I think those lines show lack of ambition and lack of will.
- T. What do you understand by lack of will?
- P. When a man knows what he ought to do, but does n't try to do it.
- T. What is frequently the next step?
- P. An attempt to shift the responsibility; he excuses himself, and puts the blame on some one else.
- T. What do you call a man that does that?
- P. A fatalist. When Andrea del Sarto does not place the responsibility upon his wife he places it upon God.

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

- T. For which of these characteristics do you condemn him most severely?
- P. His fatalism.
- T. Why?
- P. He says he could do better, he knows he could do better, but he does not, and he excuses himself by saying: "Love, we are in God's hands."
- T. Name Lucrezia's chief characteristics.¹
- P. Mercenary..... lines 8, 20, 25
No love and sympathy for her husband
lines 4, 11, 37, 53
Vain..... lines 29, 33
Cynical..... line 33
Faithless..... lines 5, 30
- T. Which characteristic is emphasized?
- P. Her love for money.
- T. Do you learn anything from the encyclopædia that you had not learned so far?
- P. Andrea del Sarto was born in Florence, a city noted for its arts and sciences, and he became a great painter. He lived in the latter part of the fifteenth century and the early part of the sixteenth. He was a painter of the Renaissance time. He studied with Michael Angelo, and Cosimo was his principal instructor. He was called to France and stayed at the court for some time at the king's palace. Then he returned.²

¹ The students were required to quote the lines illustrative of these characteristics as far as possible without their texts. The numbers indicate the lines quoted or referred to.

² Further information was added by other pupils.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

The lesson was then developed as before to line 140, and the assignment was given: —

For to-morrow: (1) Add to your characterization of Andrea del Sarto and Lucrezia what you have learned from the lines read to-day. If the characteristics you have previously seen have been emphasized, add the new line references. (2) If you condemn Andrea del Sarto, state clearly why. (3) Find from the encyclopædia something about Michael Angelo and Raphael, painters, who are mentioned in to-morrow's lesson. Know at least one picture of each painter. (4) Read in advance to line 210.

The next day, a book on Andrea del Sarto was brought to the recitation by the students. Postcards of the best pictures of Raphael, and Michael Angelo, as well as picture postcards of their portraits were brought by the teacher. Features of the Sistine Chapel, the Sistine Madonna, Mona Lisa, the Transfiguration, were pointed out and discussed in detail. Such questions as, "Who are the greatest painters? Why did these men excel others?" were raised by students. The recitation was then taken up.

T. Let us now turn to *Andrea del Sarto* again. State what you consider Andrea del Sarto's great faults.

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

- P. I condemn Andrea del Sarto because he puts the blame on his wife and on God.
- P. Andrea del Sarto has lost his ambition, and becomes a fatalist.
- P. I condemn Andrea del Sarto because he sees and knows his faults and does not try to do better.
- P. I condemn him because, if he does not blame fate or God, he blames his wife. He has lost his ambition. He has gained his end and has quit.
- T. What do we call that kind of man?
- P. A quitter.
- T. A better word.
- P. Self-satisfied.
- T. What do you understand by "A man's reach should exceed his grasp"?
- P. No matter what a man gains he should always have a higher ambition. He should continue to strive. His ambitions should be a sliding scale, and as one ideal is obtained, his ambition should mount higher. His reach, that is, his desires, should exceed what he can actually attain.
- T. Illustrate by Andrea del Sarto.
- P. He can paint perfect pictures, but he is willing to stop there. He does not put any soul into his pictures and does not try to. His reach and his grasp are the same.

The recitation was then continued, emphasizing Andrea del Sarto as a man, the students giving again line references to the poem and discussing main points. The study of the poem

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

extended to line 250. The following assignment was then made: —

Let us see what others say about the idea in line 97: "A man's reach should exceed his grasp." For tomorrow: (1) Read Tennyson's *Ulysses*, *Crossing the Bar*; and re-read *Prospice*; (2) If possible, choose a line from each poem that sums up the poem; (3) Taking Browning's idea in *Prospice* as his own ideal, criticise Andrea del Sarto, when he says: "I am grown peaceful as old age to-night"; (4) Cite illustrations from life and from literature of men who are Andrea del Sartos, and of old men who are like Ulysses; (4) Read the rest of the poem.

The last day was concerned with the discussion of the attitude of other poets toward old age, summarizing of Andrea del Sarto's characteristics in the order of their importance, and the working out of Browning's own ideas from the poem. The assignment for the next day as an assignment for recitation only was: —

(1) Read *Andrea del Sarto* aloud, and by your voice bring out, as well as you can, the meaning and spirit of the poem.

T. Andrea is talking: what will your voice have to express?

P. At times it will be pleading, at other times sarcastic, repentant, bitter, and scornful.

When the class-study of the poem was com-

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

pleted, the teacher commented briefly on *Andrea del Sarto* in a general way, and made some observations about Browning. The pupils took notes.¹

T. This poem seems to me to be one of the very finest of Browning's shorter poems, whether we think of it as a study in character or consider it from the point of view of form. Let me say just a few words first about its form.

In some of Browning's poems we have found frequently an almost harsh and crabbed style, and a vagueness and obscurity of meaning. At times we were almost repelled instead of charmed with his poems, until we worked out their meaning together. In this poem it is different. The style is colloquial; it is almost conversational, just as if one person were talking to another; one almost forgets that it is verse. When we scanned several lines together, I pointed out one of the chief reasons for this colloquial effect. It was?

P. The shifting of the cæsura.

T. Yes. That is right. *The great variation in placing the cæsura* breaks up the regularity of the verse in such a way as to make us almost forget that we are reading verse. It makes the language smoother. But there is a further reason why the

¹ They had been trained to get the gist of the teacher's remarks when occasion demanded. This is an admirable part of a pupil's training and should be required by all teachers.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

style of this poem should be so different from most of Browning's other poems. We have touched upon this in our reading; can any one tell me what it is? (No reply.) Well, we saw, did we not, that Andrea lacked ambition, that he had no great aim, no great purpose to win?

- P. Yes. He has no life; he has no force.
- T. True. As a consequence of that fact, how does he talk?
- P. In a quiet way.
- T. Just the point. Andrea's *mood* very largely affects the style of this poem. He has given up, has resigned himself to Fate. He has no force, no fire or life. Moreover, he is sentimental; he says he is grown as peaceful as old age; all is quiet feeling. He is passive, quiet, melancholy. And it is just in this *tone* that Andrea talks. If he were overflowing with ambition, eager to do and achieve something, deeply moved by passion, he would doubtless speak in Browning's usual forceful, broken, animated style. Yes, *Andrea's mood* has a very great deal to do with the style of this poem. It makes it simple, clear, even colloquial. That makes it a good poem to study. You understand it, don't you?
- P. Yes.
- T. Now observe carefully what this leads us to. If the style of this poem differs from Browning's usual style, and the style in this case is determined largely by the speaker's mood, what may we say?

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

P. Browning usually did n't write about this sort of man.

T. Yes. What sort of men did he write about?

P. People with more life and passion.

T. Yes. That is good. Then Andrea lacked in . . . ?

P. Passion; in ambition to do something.

T. Yes. Notice, then, one point that appears to be characteristic in Browning: he sees a very close connection between a man's work and the man himself. Andrea's paintings lacked soul and life because Andrea himself lacked soul and life. Andrea had become faultless in technique, but his work lacked real excellence because it lacked soul. Here we get a good idea, not only of Browning's conception of the close connection between a man and his work, but also of his ideal of art; it must have *soul*. With Browning, all art must be *full of life* to be good; it must contain great ideas; it must indicate ideals; mere perfection of form is not enough. So much, briefly, for his art.

This leads us to ask through what medium Browning chiefly revealed his ideas. How does Browning usually let us know what he thinks and feels? What does he talk about?

P. Men and women.

T. Yes. And this poem is no exception; rather it illustrates the rule. It is one of the finest examples of Browning's *portrayal of character*. Browning depicts for us a man and a woman. And he does so with such truthfulness that we never once stop to think that his portrayal may not be

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

correct. We feel that both Andrea and Lucrezia are very real. We know them better than we do many of our friends, for we have seen into their very souls. They are types of human nature that any one can recognize almost at a glance. Yes. Browning has here given us a very vivid portrayal of human nature. He deals chiefly with images of human beings in order to reveal his own ideas and feelings. Browning uses images of human beings as his material. In the third place and finally, let us see what notion of life Browning has, as he reveals it in this poem. Is passion a good thing?

P. Yes. In Browning anyway.

T. Yes. Just as painting must have soul and life, so man must have a passion for something. Some people think they are perfect; perhaps they are; but Browning would say they were more surely dead than if they were in their graves. Faultlessness in life, like faultlessness in painting, means spiritual death. The man who, like Andrea del Sarto, sacrifices or degrades emotion or passion, sacrifices and degrades his own spiritual and infinite life. The finest and best spirits in life always aspire to something beyond their reach. What a man achieves at one stage is to be used merely as a stepping-stone to the next. There is no stopping. Life is imperfect; it is imperfect so that man may grow. The end of life is not to produce some external result, to accumulate money and property, but to go on, even to the end of life, developing mind and soul. Man is

SOME PRACTICAL WORK

getting ready for immortality; if he develops steadily he will be the better prepared for it; if he becomes lazy, if he sinks into lethargy and inactivity, he will not only not accomplish anything in this life; he will not see God. Such is Browning's doctrine.

III

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

THIS class-exercise speaks for itself. There are, of course, limits to its full significance. In the first place, the character of the poem studied excludes much emphasis upon pure beauty of phrase and line. Browning is essentially ethical, philosophical, and religious in his interests. He himself gave precedence to philosophy over poetry. In consequence, the emphasis in the class-exercise submitted was necessarily upon ethical content; relatively little was said about pure imaginative beauty, because there was little occasion for such comment. But in the study of other poets, Keats and Shelley, for instance, this phase of poetry was emphasized by the teacher. No single class-exercise or even several exercises in the study of one author can bring out, with unmistakable clearness, what a teacher aims at effecting in the course of a term or a year.

This is one limitation. A further limitation arises from the fact that the full significance and all the details, often very significant details, of a teacher's method of conducting the work cannot

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

possibly be indicated through the class-exercise. With a view to affording some compensation for this limitation, I have discussed a number of the more essential points likely to arise in connection with such study. They are as follows: —

*When and how to begin the study of a poem.*¹

Some teachers make the mistake of beginning the study of a poem by assigning the poem or a part of it for home preparation. No practice is more likely to breed among pupils a hearty dislike for poetry. Poetry is not subject-matter for lessons; it is something to be enjoyed. Lessons there must be; but lessons will be futile unless they serve finally to deepen and broaden enjoyment of poetry itself. The study of a poem, unless the poem be of the very simplest kind, should always begin in class; if, in beginning a poem, an assignment for home study is made at all, it should be in material bearing upon the poem and essential to understanding it, not a part of the poem itself.

The reason for this plan becomes apparent on a moment's reflection. The study of poetry in the high school implies that the poem in hand repre-

¹ Cf. Arlo Bates, *Talks on the Teaching of Literature*, chap. VIII: the best thing in the book.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

sents some thought, feeling, or action that is an ideal for the pupil. To the teacher this ideal may be very simple, very elementary, perhaps long since attained; but for the pupil it represents something relatively new or as yet unattained in experience.¹ Required to make his own start in beginning the study of a poem, lacking the inspiration of the teacher and the stimulus of the class, blocked frequently by unfamiliar allusions and confused imagery, the pupil easily becomes discouraged and turns from his task in weariness and defeat. On the morrow he does not know his "lesson." The teacher works in vain against a dogged opposition; and the finest pedagogical efforts toward stirring interest and awakening enthusiasm fall dead. The pupil is right, the teacher wrong. The pupil's lack of interest, his opposition, even his dislike for poetry are the natural and almost inevitable result of a vicious method. What the pupil usually lacks is the necessary imagery or information to make the poem intelligible to him. Without this "apperception mass," as the psychologists call it, any poem must be largely misunderstood, if indeed it does not appear to be veritable rubbish.

The method of beginning the study of a poem

¹ See *The Making of Poetry*, p. 179 et seq.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

in class was illustrated in the exercise on *Andrea del Sarto*. By way of further illustration, let us briefly consider Tennyson's *The Charge of the Light Brigade*. According to one method the teacher would probably say, "For your lesson next time, read and study *The Charge of the Light Brigade*." When the class-hour comes, the teacher reads the first stanza and asks, "What is a league? How much, then, is half a league?" Other questions of like character follow. Incidentally, it comes out that the poem has to do with a situation in the Crimean War; but when or where the war was, what the Light Brigade was, why Tennyson should think it worth while to write a poem upon it, nowhere appear. With this necessary background vague and uncertain, the implied ideals of fine courage, unquestioning obedience, loyalty, and patriotism are lost entirely upon the pupil.

There is another way. According to this method, there is no "lesson" at all. Pupils do not even know what they are next to read in class. Memories of the keen delight in the last poem read run pleasant expectations high. The pupil comes to class predisposed favorably to his task. Then the teacher, without having as much as opened her book or named the poem to be read,

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

begins by asking, "Who can tell me something about the Crimean War? Where was it fought? What nations were engaged? Why? What is a light brigade?" While information is being elicited, images essential to the true understanding and appreciation of the poem are rapidly grouping themselves in the pupil's mind. Even this kind of activity has its pleasure. Some of the information the teacher herself will doubtless have to furnish. This can be given orally or by reading such a brief statement as the following:—

The famous charge of the English Light Brigade, immortalized in Tennyson's poem, took place at the battle of Balaklava, during the Crimean War, October 25, 1854. Balaklava is not far from Sebastopol on the borders of the Black Sea. The story is a thrilling one of bravery and of obedience to orders. The full strength of the Russian army, covered from attack by thirty guns, lay at a distance of a mile and a half from the armies of the allies (English, French, and Turks). Mackenzie's *The Nineteenth Century* gives these particulars:—

"Up to this time our Light Cavalry Brigade had not been engaged. Lord Lucan, their commander, now received by the hand of Captain Nolan a written order to advance nearer the enemy. On reading this order Lord Lucan asked its bearer how far they were

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

to advance. He received a reply which he construed with fatal inaccuracy, to signify that it was his duty to charge the enemy. The Light Brigade made itself ready to attack the Russian army. Every man knew that some terrible mistake was sending the brigade to destruction, but no man shrunk from his duty of obedience. They rode straight down the valley towards the wondering Russians and in full view of the chiefs of their own army, powerless now to restrain them. As the excitement of battle gained power over men and horses the pace increased. The shot of the Russian guns tore through their ranks, but did not abate the speed of their advance, the fierceness of their attack. They galloped their horses between the Russian guns, cutting down the gunners as they passed. They rode down and scattered several squadrons of cavalry. And then they paused, and turned back, and galloped toward the shelter of British lines. The Russians reopened upon them with grape and canister. Their return was beset by an overwhelming force of Russian cavalry; but they cut their way through and reached the position they had left scarcely half an hour before. Six hundred and seventy men went forth to that memorable ride, but only one hundred and ninety-eight came back."

Murdock's *The Reconstruction of Europe* says that the brigade would have been utterly destroyed, wiped out of existence, but for the brilliant and timely charge of a French company which attracted the attention of the Russians away from the English,

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

leaving the valley comparatively clear for a few minutes for the retreat of the remnant of the Light Brigade.¹

It will be a boy of thin blood who is not stirred by this account of the charge of the Light Brigade. To tell the story would be better still; for in that way there is carried home unconsciously to the pupil's mind a conviction of the kind of interest on the teacher's part that makes it worth while to have mastered the story for herself. However, even to read the story will do. Then the teacher begins, reading with vigor and the suggestion of picturing all vividly in imagination: —

“Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward”; —

and who can fail to see and feel the difference? It is the difference between success and failure. Now the imagination is stored with appropriate imagery for understanding the poem; some of the feelings stirred by the poem itself have already been aroused; there is an added magic in the rhythm; and the fine idealism of the poem is brought home to the pupil with an enriching power that makes him, from that moment to the end of his life, a different and a better soul. The

¹ Waitman Barbe's *Famous Poems Explained*, New York, 1908. The teacher will find it helpful.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

poem has served its true end; the pupil has understood it and enjoyed it.

As a rule, it is best to present this introductory material in class; the living voice adds interest to the material, and increases the value of it to the pupil. In some cases, of course, such a plan is impracticable. If the subject-matter is too long to be conveniently handled within the hour in such a way as to make an actual beginning upon the poem, especially if the material is inherently interesting in itself, there is no good reason why pupils should not be asked to read it before coming to class.

This material, in such a case, not the poem or its opening lines, will be the "lesson" assigned. It would be an extravagant waste of time to read in class from *The Arabian Nights* a sufficient body of material to lend interest to Tennyson's *Recollections of the Arabian Nights*. The child, of course, should have been brought up on *The Arabian Nights*; but many children have had no true nursery life; they have not even heard about *The Arabian Nights*. For all such unfortunate children, Tennyson's poem must be almost meaningless until they have read somewhat extensively and with delight in *The Arabian Nights*. An assignment preliminary to the reading of Keats's *Ode*

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

to a Nightingale would almost certainly be the Biblical story of Ruth.¹ Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Bryant's *To a Waterfowl*, Wolfe's *Burial of Sir John Moore*, Southey's *The Battle of Blenheim*, Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar*, and scores of other poems call for some kind of preliminary statement by the teacher or reading by the class, if the poems are to take on their true meaning and be enjoyed. Too often, I fear, we teachers forget that what is unbroken sunlight to us is Stygian darkness to the child. When the pupil lacks the appropriate imagery it is useless for the teacher to say, "This is beautiful"; the pupil must be led to see and feel that it is beautiful.

As so often in the teaching of poetry, the teacher must use judgment in deciding what to do. Often it is well to make a change just for the sake

¹ Perhaps the finest line in the poem is that descriptive of Ruth, "She stood in tears amid the alien corn." In a high-school senior class of forty pupils, the writer found but two who knew the story of Ruth. To several, "corn" meant maize (Missouri corn), "alien" meant imported, so that the common image for most members of the class was of a girl standing out in a Missouri cornfield (or in the midst of some imported corn) crying, and for no apparent reason whatever. Yet this is a beautiful line, and teachers tell their pupils so. Small wonder that pupils often think poetry rubbish, their teacher a pretender, and that they themselves become prigs and hypocrites instead of lovers of poetry!

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

of variety. A class-exercise even half anticipated by the pupil is well-nigh fruitless. For the high-school pupil, interest in subject-matter and theme rather than faith in prospective pleasure and profit or even in the teacher herself must usually be the carrying medium. Always begin *in class* the study of a poem that involves textual difficulties or that represents new or unattained experiences for the child. And most poems for class-study, properly selected, will involve just such difficulties and experiences. After such an introduction, after interests have been awakened and enthusiasms have been stirred, substantial assignments for home study and preparation may be safely made.

*The history of literature and its relation to the study of poetry*¹

The precise relation of the history of literature to literature itself has not as yet been determined; even the scope of the history of literature is not definitely fixed. A few years ago the tendency in the study of literature, following the teachings of biological evolution, was to reduce everything

¹ See R. M. Lovett, *The Historical and Biographical Background in Teaching Literature*. Supplement to the *Journal of the Michigan Schoolmaster's Club*.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

in literature, and especially in poetry, to an historical basis; to find the same kind of development in poems that we perceive in organisms; an analogy was read from the field of descriptive science to the field of art, more especially to the field of poetry; principles and methods were transferred bodily.

Nor has the movement been without advantage. First, it has wonderfully broadened our view of the field of literature. Not so very many years ago literature meant, at the most, classical and modern literature; now we know that the poetry of the primitive man is just as much poetry to him as Shakespeare and Tennyson are poetry to us. Without regard to the stage of its development, literature now signifies the entire field and scope of literary expression. Again, the biological analogy has given us something of a method of research. If not the evolution, at least the continuity of literature is seen to be a fact. As in other fields of knowledge, so in poetry, much that we have is to be explained in terms of origin and development.¹ And finally, this analogy has enabled us to reduce to a basis of fact many things formerly

¹ Limited, of course, to the element of fact — the element that can be described.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

left open to subjective judgment and personal impression.

At the present time there is something of a reaction from this biological analogy. The claims of science, or rather of those who attempted to apply scientific principles and methods to literature, are seen to have been too great. Books beget books, poems beget poems, but not as life begets life. A poem proves to be something essentially different from a tadpole. Influence, development, progress in literature there undoubtedly is, but not evolution. The justification of the division of all that we find in literature and immediately connected with it into an element of fact and an element of value is seen with increasing clearness. Especially is it being seen that the value element is not amenable to the methods of descriptive science. Sensibility or feeling, which is the medium through which we know the value element in poetry, which is indeed the unvariable measure of that value,¹ is being recognized anew as an irreducible element in experience. The history of literature is indispensable to the wider study of poetry, but the development of right

¹ For all such purposes, the words "feeling" and "value" may be regarded as synonymous. One's feeling with regard to anything invariably represents one's evaluation of it.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

feeling for poetry, and of an intelligent appreciation of poetry, is increasingly recognized as an earlier, more difficult, and by far more important task than the study of facts about poetry.

In the high school, an appreciation and a joyous delight in the individual poem; a comprehension of its meaning; a feeling for its emotional tone; an enjoyment of the beauty of its diction, style, and form, are undoubtedly the primary object. But this appreciation opens the way for a wider study of poetry. The perception, not only of similarities in the work of different poets but of differences as well, opens up a study of the way in which each poet's work is moulded by, and gives expression to, his life and character, and how his life and character and his view of life have been moulded by the people and the time in which he lived. No one can become truly interested in the work of any writer without being stirred with curiosity to know something about the man himself, and even about his times. The attainment of precisely the end which the true teacher of poetry sets up for himself inevitably involves new and further problems.

How much, then, of the history of literature shall I attempt to teach? quite properly asks the teacher of poetry in the high school. Only the

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

divine gift of common sense will enable one to answer that question. A broad rule, one to be eternally watched and requiring a vigilant eye for special application, may be safely phrased thus: *Get the interest; stir the enthusiasm of the pupil; then carry him just as far as he will go without loss of interest into the facts of the history of literature.* Granted a genuine appreciation, the more historical background the better. The historical element *exists for* the appreciative, finds its ultimate justification in the appreciative, must ever refer to it; helps indeed to broaden and deepen it, to carry it from one poem to another, from one period to another; makes it truer, safer, less personal, more objective.

In general, if one follow the natural method one cannot go far wrong. It is a fact that all those who possess a fine appreciation and a wide knowledge of poetry acquire their appreciation and knowledge in the same way: they enjoy some particular poem; they become curious to know something about the author; they seek to learn the antecedent conditions and the immediate circumstances that influenced him in writing the kind of poem he wrote. They proceed from books to men, from men to periods, from periods to movements in national life. The typical forms

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

of experience which poets express lend themselves happily to such advancement. They are distinctly personal, as in the lyrics of Shelley and Tennyson, and the poetry of Byron; they are national, as in Vergil and Milton, expressive of characteristics, traits, and peculiarities of a people; they are universal, as in Shakespeare, peculiar to no people, but the same in all men, irrespective of race, age, or country, who represent a common stage of civilization. Beginning with distinctly personal experiences, poetry widens its circle, first to an age, then to a country, then to man universal. The cultivated reader, even the pupil who graduates from high school, may not unreasonably be expected not only to have a hearty appreciation of the best productions of the chief English poets, but also to have an intelligent knowledge and understanding of the biographies of authors, something of literary movements and their associated national characteristics, and at least some intimation of the universal appeal of poetry to the heart of humanity.

It is evidently this ideal, under a reversal of method, that has produced some unfortunate results. It is no uncommon practice, or used to be, to begin the study of poetry with a body of

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

facts. The pupil was called upon to recite glibly dates which had no significance for him; names of authors of whom he had read nothing and really knew nothing; criticisms, of the justice or accuracy of which he had no knowledge whatsoever. A spurious admiration for the unread masterpieces of literature and an ingrained charlatanism were the inevitable result. The rapturous praising of poetry which the pupil had never read became a tribute to his assumed culture and a token of a pretended intellectual attainment.¹

Vicious as this method undoubtedly is, the result might have been worse. Under it, pupils often developed into unconscious hypocrites, praising things they knew not of; but they were at least *for* literature, not against it. The very assumption by the pupil of a liking for literature that he had not read carried with it the probability that some day he might read it. He had faith because he did not know and could not understand. If he did not read because the

¹ If this statement seems strained and unreal to any teacher, he is fortunate. In every school where the writer has ever raised the question with pupils, Why do we study literature? there were found pupils who believed that poetry was studied in order solely that they might later pass muster in polite society. In one case the teacher remarked to the writer: "That girl's reply represents her home training precisely."

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

method prevented him, he at least acknowledged the authority of those who should know; he kept his commonplace views in the background; and he paid obeisance to superior taste. In time he doubtless came to have a measure of sincerity in his devotion. He might have been a Philistine of a deeper dye. When the worst that can be said against this method has been uttered — and there is much to say — it must still be acknowledged, I think, that there *is* some value in mere lists of books and authors. Many a pupil leaves the high school to-day a positive ignoramus for the lack of a few pointed lessons on the history of literature.

Under ordinary circumstances, the study of the history of literature in the high school might most safely be confined to biography. But even for the study of biography no invariable rule can be laid down. In some cases the study of the poet's life should precede the study of the poems; in others it should be the last thing taken up; in still others it will be best to consider the poet's life in the course of studying the poems. Of one thing the teacher may feel assured: that the story of a poet's life, well told at the right time, will make a hearty appeal to the class and add to the interest and effectiveness of the study. Don't

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

read it; tell it. Biography is a kind of elevated gossip. It has to do rather intimately with other people's affairs; and there *is* such a thing as a dignified and justifiable interest in this sort of thing. Indeed, it may be through precisely this kind of study that the commonplace taste of many members of the class will be elevated from a desire for mere tittle-tattle to a sympathetic and intelligent interest in people and social events.

In the study of biography, the nearest approach to a guiding rule is probably this: *Teach the poet's life when the study of his poems seems to demand biographical and historical facts for interpretation.* Only as the study of a poet's life increases interest and adds to the significance of poems being studied, ought this kind of work to be taken up.

The type of poem studied affords the chief reason for varying the method. In general, the study of a poet's life should precede the study of lyric poetry. The lyric gives expression to the poet's own feelings. Not only will it add to the interest to know what sort of person it was who had such feelings, but often a feeling can have significance for the reader only in case he knows to whom it belonged. Think of Burns's songs, and you see how true this is. In epic poetry the

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

case is different. The great epic has to do with national themes. The life of the poet, though it may form a significant part of some national movement, is more likely to be submerged in it. The biography then might come at any appropriate stage. In the drama, the poet's life is of still less immediate consequence. It is quite possible to study one of Shakespeare's plays satisfactorily without knowing a single fact of Shakespeare's life. Clearly, the place for biography, when studying the drama, is after the reading of the play.

The order of taking up Browning's poems presented in the preceding pages seems to call naturally for the study of the poet's life somewhere near the middle of the discussion of the poems themselves. After the pupil has read *Home-Thoughts, from the Sea; Home-Thoughts, from Abroad; Cavalier Tunes; Why I am a Liberal; The Lost Leader*, he begins to ask in class, "Did Browning live in Italy? Was he a liberal? Was he a friend of Wordsworth? Did he resent not being made Poet Laureate?" Then, surely, is the time for taking up the poet's life. Again, after having read *My Star, A Face, and Prospice*, a real interest in Elizabeth Barrett is created. In two high-school classes in Browning the pupils read

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

assiduously long accounts of Browning's life in order to determine whether or not he lived his philosophy. Was he Christian? Was he optimistic? Did he revel in the wild joys of living? Did he fight until old age? Did he make success of failures? How did he meet death?

So, in studying Burns, the pupil will soon feel the need of knowing something of the poet's life. If *To a Mouse* or *To a Mountain Daisy* is read first, questions of what manner of man Burns was and of his life at once arise. Pupils are soon interested in Dorothy Wordsworth, in Byron's mother and the circumstances of Byron's life that tended to embitter his nature, in Tennyson's last days, in Whittier's attitude toward slavery.

It is sometimes advisable to consider different phases of a poet's life at different times. If a somewhat comprehensive study of Milton be undertaken, the period up to 1639 may be discussed in connection with *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Lycidas*, and the early sonnets; from 1640 to 1660 may be cursorily passed over; and the poet's later life read in connection with the study of *Paradise Lost* and the later sonnets.

The high-school stage is not the stage at which it is expected that one shall come into full possession of an author's work. The teacher who

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

might attempt such a task is now happily imaginary. But even at the high-school stage the intimation should be clearly made that no one can really know an author until he has learned all he can about the author's life, his character and motives, his environment, and the national life of which he has formed a part. A systematic study of biography and at least a few lessons on the history of literature will generally convey this intimation. A great deal can be done incidentally by the teacher.

It should never be forgotten that the chief purpose of the study of poetry in the high school has to do with the understanding and appreciating of poems themselves, not with facts about these poems or their authors, certainly not with the judgments of critics. If we wish to cultivate our musical taste, we must hear good music; if we wish to understand and enjoy painting and sculpture, we must see good painting and sculpture; if we wish to enjoy architecture, we must see buildings of artistic construction; if we wish to understand and appreciate poetry, we must read and study poetry, not books about poetry. The teacher who succeeds in bringing home to a pupil some adequate measure of the inherent beauty, delight, and charm of a single great poem, be it

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

Michael, Andrea del Sarto, L'Allegro, or Macbeth, has done infinitely more for the pupil than if he sends him out with an encyclopædic knowledge of the facts of literature from Beowulf to Robert Bridges. The pupil who, in some adequate measure, has been made sensible of the beauty, inspiration, and power of poetry; who has been led to feel the awakening and liberalizing effect of a single great poem; who has learned not merely to talk about poetry in the class-room but to read it with delight in his leisure hours, has learned the secret of literary appreciation. No teacher can bestow a finer gift.

Memorizing

It is well to memorize a great deal of poetry. First, memorizing is essential to true mastery. No one can be said truly to have mastered a poem until he has memorized it; for truly to know a poem is to know the language of that poem.¹ Change the words, you change the meaning or modify the feeling of a poem, always to an inferior form. Only its own language can successfully intimate the idea or awaken the emotion of a true poem, be it *Andrea del Sarto, The Ode to Duty, or Macbeth*. The critique, paraphrase, restatement

¹ Cf. Bradley, *Poetry for Poetry's Sake*.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

in other form, are all desirable and helpful in class-study; but each makes a new product; is in no sense the poem itself; is but a part-meaning in a form more immediately familiar, perhaps, but finally always less effective than the poem itself. To have memorized the language of a poem is to have gone a long way toward knowing the poem as it really is.

Something even more important than mastery is gained. Especially at the high-school stage is it true that to store the mind with the noble thoughts and the lofty sentiments of great poetry is to repel vulgar and commonplace views, to exert a refining influence upon taste and language, to elevate morals, and to provide in later years an unflinching source of consolation for the disappointments, the disheartenments, and the defeats of daily life.

Discrimination and judgment with regard to what is selected for memorizing must be exercised if an actual aversion to poetry and distaste for it are to be avoided. Clearly, not all poetry studied should be memorized. Some of it is too long; much of it is not distinctive enough in value. Always the relative value of a poem or of lines in it should be taken into account. Extensive memorizing of poetry should certainly be

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

required in high school; for at no stage can poetry be learned with greater facility. Pupils should be allowed some latitude in selecting poems and passages. Perhaps the best plan would be to require a given amount, leaving the pupils largely free to select for themselves. Helpful, guiding suggestions can always be made by the adroit teacher. In general it is well to memorize

- (a) Passages that have become the common possession of people of culture.
- (b) Passages that impress you as the perfect expression of a great thought or idea.
- (c) Passages that reveal some form of refined feeling.
- (d) Passages that impress you as very tender and beautiful.
- (e) Passages characteristic of the author.
- (f) Passages expressive of the subject, motive, or tone of the poem.
- (g) Passages that you think you would often feel like repeating through life, to give better expression to your own thoughts and feelings than you could give them in your own words.
- (h) Passages that strikingly illustrate certain qualities of style.¹

¹ Cf. M. F. Libby, *Selections from Wordsworth*, p. 171.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

No invariable rule for the time of memorizing a poem can be laid down. In a few cases it is well to memorize a poem before studying it in class. Poems, such as lyrics, which give expression to some familiar thought or feeling; poems in which pupils find

“What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;
Something, whose truth convinc'd at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind” —

will lend themselves best to such a plan. Hood's *I remember, I remember* is illustrative. As a general rule, however, it is best to defer the memorizing until after the poem has been studied in class; it will be best, at least, in the case of all poems not likely to be clearly understood and enjoyed by the pupil, reading by himself.

In the hands of a skillful teacher, memorizing becomes an easy part of the pupil's task, a large part of it being accomplished in the class-room. Before he realizes it, the pupil may have learned much of the actual language of a poem. To accomplish this desirable end, the teacher must insist that, in his replies, the pupil give the exact words of the author, not merely the general idea. Habits of accuracy and precision are the indirect fruits of this mode of memorizing. In the teaching of a poem, the teacher should again and again

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

put such questions as: "What does the poet himself say?" "Quote the exact lines." "In what poem that we have studied have you found this idea expressed before? Quote the passage."

After spending four class-hours on *Andrea del Sarto*, students were asked this question: "If some one should say to you, as you walk home to-day, 'I have just read *Andrea del Sarto*,' what line or lines would come to your mind?" The following are passages given: —

"I am grown peaceful as old age to-night.
I regret little, I would change still less."

"Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for?"

"Love, we are in God's hand.
How strange now looks the life he makes us lead;
So free we seem, so fettered fast we are!"

"A common grayness silvers everything, —
All in a twilight, you and I alike
— You, at the point of your first pride in me
(That's gone you know), — but I, at every point;
My youth, my hope, my art, being all toned down
To yonder sober pleasant Fiesole."

This kind of exercise takes longer to tell about than it does to perform. After such review, the teacher can say, "Quote your favorite five lines from *Andrea del Sarto*," and to the pupil's own

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

surprise he can repeat them. He has memorized the essential parts of the poem without having to do it as a task.

✓ Memorizing poetry under such conditions as these becomes a very real pleasure. Pupils are always glad actually to "know" a poem that has meaning to them; it is the task of acquiring it that is irksome. Moreover, the pupil knows what he is talking about. Such memory work means more than the repetition of words. Images of a delightful and wholesome character crowd in upon the young imagination of the pupil, and he comes more fully into possession of the poetic experience. At the close of a term, by repeating passages again and again and correlating lines, the pupil will have made one more step toward realizing the full truth of Dante's lines:—

"All
Are blessed, even as their sight descends
Deeper into truth, wherein rest is
For every mind."

The value of good reading

"The desideratum is the education, intellectual and spiritual, especially the latter, without which the mere teaching and training are vain and impotent." "The organs of speech can be

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

brought by intelligent training into complete obedience to the will and the feelings." In these two statements, the late Professor Corson, himself a reader of rare power, has summed up the essential conditions of good reading.¹ Good reading involves a clear and strong intellectual grasp, a delicate and subtle emotional response to idea and feeling, and a control and modulation of the vocal organs that will, with unerring fidelity, reveal the intellectual grasp and the emotional response.

Nothing can contribute more to the study of poetry in the high school than reading, understood and employed in this sense. No test of appreciation is more exacting. Professor Corson would make it the supreme test for examination purposes. "In literary examinations," he says, "whatever other means may be employed, a sufficiently qualified teacher could arrive at a nicer and more certain estimate of what a student has appropriated, both intellectually and spiritually, of a literary product, or any portion of a literary product, by requiring him to read it, than he could arrive at through any amount of catechising."²

¹ *The Voice and Spiritual Education*, New York, 1896.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 55. The teacher blessed with a good voice is

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Interpretative reading of this kind involves certain invariable requirements. In the first place, it must be free from gesture and display. Reading, says Corson, is not acting; and private as well as public readers will do well to lay the statement to heart. All theatrical effects should be studiously avoided. In no way should the reader obtrude himself. He is the living voice between the poet and the listener, and as such he should keep himself and his personal qualities in the background. Again, he should read very slowly. In poetry thought is often condensed; connections are often remote; images inherently pleasing in themselves, so that the mind takes pleasure in lingering upon them; even the language is rare and unusual. The effects of these several conditions can be successfully produced only by reading slowly. Then, rise and fall of tone should *indicate the sense*; as the reader reads, the meaning should unfold itself. It should, too, suggest the proper feeling to the listener. It should not only avoid monotony; it should stir anticipation and expectation constantly. Finally, it should make

indeed fortunate. But every one can do something toward improving his voice. Corson's little book will give one practical suggestions. It should be followed by some such book as Sweet's *The Sounds of English*, Oxford, 1908.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

evident the rhythm of the verse. Better to fall into a sing-song than to read poetry as if it were prose.¹ The meter should be emphasized; rhymes should be clearly marked; and even the end of the line, where there is no rhyme, should be indicated by a pause. Good reading makes clear the finer shades of meaning and connection; gives pleasure to the ear through the music of the verse; and stirs the fitting emotion through harmony of tone and meaning.

The ideal method of studying a poem is to have the teacher read the poem aloud first; then to study it critically; then to read it through again. The last reading may often be done exclusively by pupils; more difficult parts may at times best be read by the teacher. Except in the case of very simple poems, readily understood and appreciated by the pupils, it is a mistake to begin the study of a poem by calling upon some member of the class to read aloud. A moment's thought will show that the request is really contradictory. Good reading demands, first of all, that one shall clearly understand the sense of what he reads. But the pupil has not yet studied

¹ Scott, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Tennyson all turned their reading of poetry into a kind of chant. Chant or sing-song that fails to indicate the sense is, of course, fatal.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

the poem; he does not understand it. How, then, can he read it intelligently? The request implies precisely the mastery of the poem that the pupil does not possess. In the practical work submitted, it will have been observed that, during the classroom discussion, practically all the reading aloud was done by the teacher; it will have been observed also that the last assignment for the pupils, after the poem had been carefully studied in class, was reading the poem aloud. This is as it should be.

Certain almost unsuspected advantages spring from following such a plan. The most important of these is that the pupil enters more fully into the feeling and spirit of the poem than he possibly can under other conditions. It is a fact always to be kept in mind by the teacher of poetry that emotion communicates itself in subtle ways simply through the presence of other people. Every teacher, sensitive to the response of her class, knows how waves of emotion pass over the class from time to time. Every pupil knows, without defining the matter to himself, how much more deeply moved he is by the living voice of the teacher than he is by the dead words on the page. But especially true is it that all forms of feeling connected with art are social in character;

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

they always imply the presence of other people. The class-room, then, instead of representing a highly artificial condition for the study of poetry, represents an entirely natural one; it makes a social unit to be brought into a common state of feeling. Good reading is a very potent factor in bringing about this common state of feeling. If the teacher reads well, she often need do little else, especially with the simpler poems; the glow upon the pupil's face shows that the meaning is clear and that the right emotion has been stirred. And for the pupil, the possibility of winning the teacher's open approval and of stirring the silent appreciation of his classmates is a stimulus to him to enter as fully as he can into the feeling and spirit of the poem. In this way do the teacher and pupil have a truer and deeper joy in what they read than they could have otherwise.

A further advantage is that a motive for reading well is aroused in the minds of the pupils. One reason why pupils, and especially boys, so often read poorly in class is that they feel subconsciously that it is rather foolish to read well. Each student knows that his fellow students have a book, just like his, open at the same page; let them read for themselves. Something of this attitude is pretty consistently seen wherever the

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

teacher follows the custom of beginning the class-study of a poem by saying, "John, please read the first stanza." Even though John had studied his lesson the night before, he knows within him that he does not really understand the lines and cannot read them well. His respect for the teacher leads him to suppose that, for some reason, she must be right; but he still feels that it is foolish for him to read. Sometimes he has a vague suspicion that the request is made, not because the teacher expects much of him, but simply to "get things going." The result generally confirms John's judgment and point of view. Again the pupil is right, the teacher wrong. But where interpretative reading of the kind I have described is used, all this feeling of artificiality goes out at a stroke. The pupil no longer feels foolish in reading well. The stimulus that he gets from his teacher's reading, and the infectious enthusiasm caught from his classmates, stir in him such natural and delightful feelings that he forgets himself. There is awakened in him the desire, not only to read the poem a little bit better than his neighbor does, but, some day at least, in some measure even "as teacher reads it."

Through good reading, imitation of precisely the best that is to be gained from a poem comes

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

thus to be stimulated in the pupil. The teacher of poetry who has a good voice is blessed of heaven. By this means she can give an inspiration and convey an unspoken encouragement that sink deep with young people who hate to appear in the light of being "directly profited." Intelligent comprehension, deepened interest and enthusiasm, truer and more delicate feelings, favorable forms of competition, commendable imitation — these are among the rich fruits that spring from good reading, judiciously employed in the teaching of poetry.

Title and theme or true subject of a poem

The title and the theme of a poem are often not the same. Not all poems, of course, can properly be said to have a theme. Especially true is this of songs and lyrics. There are some dangers, too, in attempting to formulate the theme of any great work of art. "The Story of Perverted Ambition" does not truly represent what there is in *Macbeth*, yet if we attempt to formulate its theme this statement might very well do. Each work of art is, indeed, the *only* true expression of its idea. Yet, since great poems do undoubtedly contain great ideas, it is often a help to try to formulate these ideas as a means of

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

coming into a clearer understanding and a richer appreciation of the poetic value of the poems themselves.

Andrea del Sarto, a man's name and the title of a poem, affords us no idea whatsoever of the theme of the poem. The theme might be variously phrased as, "The secret causes in a man's soul of artistic failure"; or, "The conflict in an artist of great skill and promise, between his devotion to his art and his infatuation with a beautiful but heartless and wicked woman"; or, again, "The tragic ruin wrought in the life and art of a potentially great man through a destructive infatuation with a beautiful but ignoble woman." But no statement, however true or comprehensive it may be, can adequately represent the poem. The poem differs from the statement just because it is more. Could we effectively reduce a poem or a play to the statement of a theme or to an essay, there would no longer be any use for the poem. The poem is what it is because nothing else can possibly take its place or fulfill its function. Yet the statement of a theme will often serve as a help to a clearer understanding and a richer appreciation than would otherwise be possible.

Oftentimes, perhaps as a rule, the subject of a poem is something that is not in itself inherently

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

poetical. Consider Wordsworth's beautiful little poem, *The Green Linnet*. A green linnet is not, in and of itself, a suitable subject for a poem. What has moved the poet, what has stirred within him the æsthetic experience, is the joy he feels on the return of spring. This is his theme. But it would mean nothing for Wordsworth merely to tell us that he felt a deep joy on the return of spring. That would not move us at all. He must have a carrying medium for his emotion. And he finds an appropriate carrying medium in the image of the green linnet. That, then, becomes the central image of his poem; it is the image about which all others in the poem are grouped. And so the name of this bird becomes a suitable title for his poem. The theme is a different and another thing.

With this distinction made clear, any one author may be made the starting-point for the study of other authors. Poems, like the plots of stories, offer few essentially new thoughts; poets represent the old fundamental truths simply from different angles. After Browning has been studied, a tabulation of his principal ideas may be made with line references to poems. When this has been done, other poets can readily be seen to agree or disagree with Browning. The

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

more important ideas can be worked out in class; others can be studied out by the student.

Under this plan, a great amount of reading that students would otherwise not enjoy, yet reading that high school pupils should do, whether preparing for life or for college, can be done with celerity and comprehension in connection with class-work. Four or five days may seem a long time to spend on one poem of Browning's; and yet, with that time well spent, a basis for a great deal of reading that may be quickly done is provided. The recitation on *Ulysses* showed that the students read this poem understandingly. *Prospice* needs only five minutes after *Andrea del Sarto* has been elaborated. If *Rabbi Ben Ezra* has been previously read, Coleridge's *Youth and Age*, Byron's *To a Youthful Friend*, Shakespeare's *That time of year thou mayst in me behold*, Shelley's *Stanzas Written in Dejection near Naples*, Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale*, Milton's sonnet *On His Blindness* may be quickly worked out and enjoyed by the students immediately after *Andrea del Sarto*. In this manner poetry takes on a growing unity; it comes less and less to be thought of by pupils as a chaotic mass of poems. Novels that embrace similar situations may be used as parallel outside readings.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

The significance of the mental image in teaching poetry

The material out of which poetry is made is the mental image. Though for the sake of convenience we speak of poetry as being in books, poems are of course not found on the printed page. Neither do poems consist of versified language. The language of poetry, whether written, printed, or spoken, is but the symbol of something else; it is not the poem itself; it is the mechanical means of representing or of calling up mental images. A poem is really a state of mind. It is an inner experience of a definite type. It is not in any sense an external thing. It is not even a fixed quantity. *Michael* or *Hamlet* is one thing at fifteen, an almost entirely different thing at fifty. A poem is made up primarily of groups of mental images, arranged in such a way as to unfold new and significant ideas and to produce worthy forms of feeling.

Poetry begins and ends in feeling. Why, then; this recourse to mental imagery? Because there are no images of feeling. An image is the representative in the mind of something that we come to know through our senses; and for everything we come to know through our senses we can call

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

up some kind of image — a cloud, a tree, a bird, a horse, a person; but for no kind of feeling itself can we ever possibly have a direct image. This simple fact determines and fixes the whole nature of poetry. The poet does not say: "Feel grief and loneliness." That would not move us at all. We can get no images of these feelings, and so we are unmoved. But when the poet groups images of a common tone-color together and gives us, *Break, break, break*, we share his experience with him. So, the poet does not say: "Feel a deep, an almost unexpressible joy, imagining you hear the song of the skylark." That, he well knows, would be useless. To share his emotion we must duplicate his imagery, or approximate doing so; and so he writes: —

"Hail to thee, blithe spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art!"

Following the poet's language, duplicating his imagery, we come readily into something of the poet's feeling. We have the poetic experience of one kind of deep joy; just as in the other case we have the poetic experience of grief and loneliness.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

The significance of the mental image in teaching poetry can scarcely be overemphasized. Nine tenths of the questions we ask have as their ultimate purpose the calling-up and grouping of right imagery. Questions dealing with the meaning of words, with points in history, with geography, with grammar, even punctuation, should all be conceived, not as a comfortable basis of fact for teaching poetry, something tangible upon which pupils can be required to get up notes and recite lessons, but as a body of material to be imaginatively apprehended, so that the central images of the poet may be the more truly framed in imagination, understood, and appreciated. Think of Chaucer's *Prologue*. Every question, if we study it as literature, not as language, has as its purpose that we shall see, know, understand, and enjoy Chaucer's great group of characters. Where any essential part of the imagery is misconceived and wrong, there can be no intelligent understanding or appreciation of a poem. Conversely, in the measure that we are able to duplicate the poet's imagery as he wrote his poem, shall we, in general, get the poet's point of view, see through his eyes, enter into his emotion, share in his poetic experience. In the study of *Andrea del Sarto*, the only possible excuse for

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

presenting material from Vasari, of getting at the facts of the lives of Andrea and Lucrezia, of reading about the period in which they lived, is to gain more accurate, vivid images, — images more nearly duplicating the poet's images than would be possible otherwise — and so to gain the poet's conception of these characters, see how he viewed them, discern what he saw lacking in their lives, and finally apprehend the true ideals in terms of which he judged they failed.

Certain important facts concerning the mental image should be firmly grasped in order to teach poetry successfully. First, there is a rising scale of images. The worth of a poem is definitely fixed in part by the kind of central imagery it uses. Whoever the poet may be, a poem on a stone must, in general, be of less worth than a poem on a bird; a poem on a bird must, in the same way, be of less worth than a poem on a man. *The Green Linnet*, however perfect, must ever be less than *Michael*. The drama is the highest order of poetry, not because it happens to include the name of Shakespeare, but because it uses the highest type of imagery known to poetry, man himself. Roughly grouped, images might be arranged as follows: stone, earth, fire, water, plant, animal, man. The scale is not fixed, except

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

that it must always culminate in man. The basis of relative value among images is the degree to which their corresponding objects will themselves admit the life of man; the extent to which man may project his life into things about him; the degree to which he may humanize or personalize them. A stone will admit only a limited side of man's life; a plant a little more; a bird or animal still more; and man most of all. In his fellowman alone does man find all his experiences paralleled; into man alone is he able to project the full measure of his life. In all poetry, the character of the images as well as the manner of their arrangement will go far toward determining the true worth of a poem.

Equally important is the fact discovered a few years ago, that people differ, often remarkably, in their dominant type of imagery. For the word "horse," for example, some will get a vivid, intense, definitely colored and located image of a particular horse; some will get a less vivid image of a horse, not located or colored; some will get simply a curved line corresponding to the horse's neck or back; some will get an image of touch — the sleek coat of a horse; a few will get an olfactory image — the smell of a horse; others will get a sound image — the "clankety-clank"

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

of the horse's feet on the pavement; and others will get simply the word "horse."

These differences are now a matter of familiar knowledge, but we sometimes fail to catch the significance of them for the teaching of poetry. For all practical purposes, for getting along in the world, *any image will do*; one is just as good as another. But for understanding and appreciating poetry, the vivid, intense, fully detailed image is almost invariably indispensable. Suppose we are reading the lines from *Henry V*, descriptive of the tired army horses: —

". . . their poor jades
Lob down their heads, drooping the hides and hips,
The gum down-roping from their pale-dead eyes,
And in their pale dull mouths the gimmel bit
Lies foul with chew'd grass, still, and motionless."

The boy who characteristically gets the word "horse," whose imagery is made up of signs and symbols, he who is possibly the budding mathematician, scientist, or philosopher; or the boy, born a chemist, who characteristically gets the smell image of things; or the girl, the potential musician, who hears the beat and clang of the horse's feet on the pavement — these will not see this picture in a flash as will those who are headed for the study of poetry; those who readily

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

visualize things. Those pupils who do not visualize readily, who do not get an image of the thing itself, full and clear, as soon as they read the words, *need more time than others, should be asked relatively more questions*, if they are to understand and appreciate poetry as others do.

Yet what do we teachers commonly do? We ask most of the questions of those who need them least, who answer most readily because they visualize most readily and accurately, who seem quickest to "get the right answer"; we neglect and ignore, often as dull and incompetent, those who seem to "have no taste for poetry," simply because, however keen in other subjects these pupils may be, they happen to have a dominant type of imagery that fits them primarily for science or mathematics rather than for poetry.¹ Yet experiment has shown that any one, no matter what his dominant type of imagery, can, with a little time and effort, call up the vivid, intense images. Any one, that is, can cultivate a "taste for poetry." For, with the imagery right, appreciation will generally take care of itself. Appreciation cannot, indeed, be directly culti-

¹ Every teacher of poetry knows that very bright pupils are not infrequently unhappy in classes where work in literature is required. Often the cause lies here.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

vated. But until one has the right imagery, until one comes into something of the same content and frame of mind of the poet, poetry must of necessity be to him little more than "words, words, words." All successful teaching of poetry must take into account the disparity of types of imagery characteristic of different minds.¹

Another important fact will not unlikely be overlooked at times. We are apt to think that only those images of which the poet has given us definite token in language make up his poem. But this is far from being true. The poet has told us so. Wordsworth tells us that a half-hour's roam through "imperial bowers" would leave behind a dance of images for weeks; images came uncalled for and "rising up like exhalations." And Shelley tells us that "the most glorious poetry that has ever been communicated to the world is probably a feeble shadow of the original

¹ Other differences aside, the greater variety of types of imagery likely to be found in the average high school class is itself sufficient reason why the teacher in high school should read more slowly, and attempt to read much less, relatively, than the teacher in the university. The greater the disparity of imagery, the less should be read; the greater the need of reading more slowly. Where students "elect" literature, they will almost certainly be visualizers; they will "see" things. With them one may read more rapidly. It is easy to discover the dominant types of imagery.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

conceptions of the poet." Any one who reads his *Skylark* must realize this. The image of the skylark is a mere center about which other images grouped themselves, probably with extreme rapidity. Images, we may believe, fairly stormed upon the poet's mind as he listened enraptured by the bird's song, and as he wrote his poem.

It is these secondary or associated images, the fringe or clothes, as they have been called, of the central images that are of primary importance in teaching poetry. Here it is that the peculiar touch of genius is best revealed. For those images which are directly represented on the printed page are, or should be, selected by the poet with an intuition of what, in general, they will arouse. Here it is, too, that the teacher's consummate skill is required. For the guiding questions that are asked should always be framed with a view not only to having the pupil get the central images true and clear, but also to arousing properly associated imagery. It is the associated imagery, the "secondary stories," as Stevenson calls them, that chiefly make the poem, as art, contemplative;¹ make it inexhaustibly suggestive; make it more at fifty than it possibly

¹ Hence the reason always for reading slowly and deliberately.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

could be at fifteen. In any poem, the central images, those directly signified by the language of what we call the poem, merely strike certain notes, and these echo endlessly throughout the known and unexplored recesses of the mind. Any poem well taught becomes, accordingly, a life possession. As the years go by, a poem grows richer. The more one brings, the more one finds. New groupings of images forever gather joyfully about the old, familiar, central images of the poem; new shades of meaning are apprehended; new suggestions caught; further and richer types of emotion experienced.¹

The study of verse-form

For purposes of the study of poetry in high school, verse-form may consistently be regarded as an essential part of poetry.² In order to appreciate individual poems and to understand some of their points of similarity, high-school pupils should, accordingly, have a clear understanding of the types of meter and of the chief poetic forms.

¹ See *The Making of Poetry*, pp. 78-80.

² It will be advisable, I think, not to raise the question with high-school pupils whether it is possible to have poetry without verse, though they can readily enough see that it is possible to have verse that is not poetry. See *The Making of Poetry*, chapter v.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

The possible intimation that verse-form is something extraneous, something superadded to the poem itself by the poet, should be studiously avoided. Many pupils are likely to begin their study of poetry in high school with the preconceived notion that poetry is prose broken up into irregular lines, and this notion may in some measure appear to be confirmed by the fact that, in class-study, form and thought are considered apart. Some special effort may be required, on the teacher's part, to offset this notion. Pupils can be led to see that thought and form cannot in reality be separated. Thought is not thought until it takes form in the mind. It may be possible to state the theme of a poem in prose; but that statement involves the loss of just the emotional accompaniment which makes the poem what it is. The emotional accompaniment can be faithfully rendered only through the form which the poet employs. By apt illustration pupils can readily be led to see that if you change the verse-form or the stanza, you change the emotional atmosphere. Form is organic, a part of the poem itself; the greater and more perfect the poem, the more inseparably are form and content woven together.

For high-school purposes, instruction in verse-

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

form will best be given in connection with the study of individual poems. On occasion, this kind of incidental instruction may be broadened into a somewhat formal exposition. Probably the best plan is to take advantage of some topic which relates to verse and to use that as a means of introducing the subject. The teacher should always watch closely the interest of the class and never carry the discussion in its formal aspects to the point of weariness and dislike. But, skillfully handled, even the discussion of the technical aspects of verse may be successfully introduced on occasion, and the pupil brought to a clear understanding of the different types. There is no reason why a pupil graduating from high school should not have a clear and accurate knowledge of the main types of meter and of stanzaic form.

Poetic diction

The total effects of beauty and of thought that we gather from a poem do not come merely from the poem as a whole; they come from the parts. The words and phrases of a poem should, whenever possible,¹ be beautiful in themselves and suggest beautiful images; they should contribute

¹ Cf. the statement by Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, p. 149 (Bohn ed.): "A poem of any length neither can be, nor ought to be, all poetry."

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

something to the thought of the poem; and they should affect the feelings. Poetic diction, with which we can here deal only very cursorily, is, accordingly, a phase of the study of poetry important alike for pupil and teacher.

This is not the occasion to consider the distinctive characteristics of poetic diction, but one or two suggestions of possible helpfulness to the teacher may be made. In the first place, poetic diction is concrete. Very few abstract, general terms will be found in good poetry. Poetry deals with the concrete and the particular, not with the abstract and general. It is for this reason that the diction of poetry, contrary perhaps to popular conception, more nearly approaches the diction of everyday life than does the diction of prose, especially expository prose. Daily life and poetry alike deal chiefly with individual things, not with classes, with the concrete, not the abstract; expository prose deals with abstract conceptions and general terms. Vasari says Lucrezia was faithless, jealous, overbearing, and vixenish. These terms really convey little that is impressive to our minds. Compare with these terms and their effect the actual language of the speaker in even the first four lines of *Andrea del Sarto*, as Browning imaginatively conceived a

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

concrete and particular situation. He makes Andrea say, "do not let us *quarrel — any more — my Lucrezia — bear with me — for once — Sit down —* and all shall happen *as you wish — You turn your face —* but does it *bring your heart?*" Even now we know more than Vasari has told us or ever can tell us. All that lies behind these words, all that is implied, can never be put into language. Who shall exhaust the full content of such expressions as "quarrel *any more,*" "My Lucrezia," "does it *bring your heart?*" So, too, the expository writer would probably have said that the trees within the convent wall "were grouped"; but the poet says they are "huddled." A glance at any page of poetry will confirm the statement that the diction of poetry is mainly concrete.

Another very important characteristic of poetic diction is its suggestiveness. The great phrases and lines in poetry are inexhaustibly suggestive. The longer one dwells upon them the more one finds; as a man grows older, poetry grows richer. Such expressions as —

"Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time"
and

"The murmuring surge
That on the unnumber'd idle pebbles chafes" —

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

are inexhaustible in their suggestiveness. The inexpressible pathos of Michael's tragic life is compressed into the single line: —

“And never lifted up a single stone.”

No one can ever completely unfold it. When Horatio tells Hamlet of the appearance of his father's ghost and says, “It would have much amazed you,” and Hamlet, speaking slowly, says, “Very like, very like,” years of meditation will never conceive fully all that passed through Hamlet's mind in that single moment or two. The third-rate artist would have had Hamlet *say* a great deal; Shakespeare knew that it was better to use a phrase that would stir thought and imagination endlessly. Poetry is “free”; it uses words and expressions that lend wings to the mind, that liberate it and give it free scope, that carry it on to Heaven's gate itself, and even afford it glimpses of the glory within.

Then again, poetic diction is usually simple. I shall mention just two reasons for this that may be used by the teacher of poetry. In the first place, the simple, Anglo-Saxon, often monosyllabic, words are the first to be learned in life. Words of foreign origin are usually longer, and they are learned relatively late in life. The

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

latter have, in consequence, a much lower emotional accompaniment than have the words learned early in life. "Domicile," as a word, is just as good as "home"; "demise" is as good as "death"; but unless it be to indicate a speaker's artificiality, neither is likely to be found in poetry. When the poet wishes to awaken emotion he naturally selects words most likely to arouse it; he selects words which have such associations as will affect the emotions strongly; and these are the words that go back even to early childhood. Shakespeare frequently indicates the difference between genuine and pretended emotion through a difference in language; the sincere character uses simple language, the hypocritical character uses words of foreign derivation. Regan, in *King Lear*, says she is "alone felicitate" in her dear highness' love; Cordelia says she will "love and be silent." Exeter, in *Henry V*, recounting with deep feeling the death of York, says:—

"But I had not so much of man in me,
And all my mother came into my eyes
And gave me up to tears."

All, except two words in this passage, are monosyllabic. The most effective poetic diction is simple diction.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

Poetic diction is simple and short for a still further reason: it is more economical for the poet. Whatever the poetic form, the poet has only a relatively limited amount of space in which to express his thought or intimate his feeling. In the case of the sonnet, for example, the poet is definitely limited to a given number of available syllables; there are only fourteen lines, each of a specific number of syllables. It behooves the poet, then, to use the simplest and shortest words available, not only because of the stronger emotional accompaniment that such words have, but because they are short. "Woe" and "overwhelming sorrow" mean precisely the same thing. But to use "overwhelming sorrow," an expression of six syllables, instead of "woe," a word of one syllable, would be burning up available space with a prodigality destructive of the artistic end in view. Mere economy, then, is a further reason why poetic diction should be made up chiefly of short, simple words.

Regarded from the point of view of parts of speech, no words in poetic diction are more important than the verb and the adjective. A moment's reflection will show why this is true. Poetry, we have seen, deals with the concrete and particular; it deals, moreover, with things

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

with which, for the most part, we are familiar. Most of the nouns in poetry represent things familiar in the world about us. The poet presents these things in a new light. And he does so through the distinctive use of verbs and adjectives. Adjective and verb alike express an attribute, a quality, a state, or an action of a thing or person. In the case of the adjective, the attribute or whatever it may be, is *assumed* as belonging to the object, as when Wordsworth speaks of the "shuddering ivy." In the case of the verb, the attribute or whatever it may be is *declared* to belong to the object or person, as when the poet says the "hour steals." One assumes, implies, or takes for granted the recognition of the connection between "shuddering" and "ivy"; the other explicitly states that there is a connection between "hour" and "stealing." So Browning says, "*Shut* the money into this small hand"; "*serpentine* beauty"; "A common grayness *silvers* everything"; "My youth, my hope, my art, being *all toned down*"; —

"That length of convent-wall across the way
Holds the trees *safer, huddled* more inside."

Poetry, as Aristotle says, deals with the particular in the light of the universal. Poets do not use distinctive verbs and adjectives simply for

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

the sake of novelty. They deal with common objects of everyday life in such a way as to reveal universal principles. They group things, in the form of images, into new and significant relations. They unfold some measure of the universal law of which each and every thing is a part manifestation. And they do so especially through the effective use of verbs and adjectives. These are the significant *relating* parts of speech. They are the words through which especially the poet is able to signify the new connections among things that he has conceived. Wordsworth and Burns do it with the common things of life; Shakespeare does it with man; Milton does it with the supernatural; but each unconsciously uses the same method; he reveals what he has to say principally through the distinctive use of verbs and adjectives.¹

¹ The importance of this idea for the teacher of poetry in the high school can, it seems to me, scarcely be overemphasized. To dwell especially upon the verbs and adjectives in poetry is in general to dwell upon the significant combinations effected by the poet. And to enable the mind of the pupil imaginatively to comprehend these new combinations, to help him actually to realize them in his own consciousness, is to elevate that consciousness from the plane of mistaken conceptions, false ideals, and untruth, to the plane of universal law. It is to transform temporarily, it may be, but still for the moment to transform, the boy whom we may know simply as "Tom Smith" into a part of universal humanity. No task is more difficult to achieve,

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

What the verb or adjective is to the noun, the metaphor and simile are to the poem as a whole. Verbs and adjectives, indeed, very largely make up the life of the metaphor and simile: the two are very intimately connected. A suggestion or two may be of help. In the first place, any possible notion that, by the use of metaphor and simile, the poet "decorates" simple things for the sake of effect should be broken down. Pupils should, by every possible means, be led to see and feel the naturalness, even the inevitableness, of poetry. But they may easily become confused. While studying a poem they are impressed by the peculiar effectiveness, let us say, of a simile. But when they attempt to use a like simile in their composition they are told it is bad style. No wonder they feel beaten back and forth! To avoid such confusion they must see that the great end of prose, especially expository prose, is clearness; and that the chief justification for the use of a simile in prose is to add to the clearness. In poetry, on the other hand, they must see that the great end is the arousing of elevated and refined feelings; and that the chief justification

none could be more worthy. In the successful accomplishment of it, in the pupil's joyous attainment of it, lies all there is or ever can be in the teaching of poetry.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

for using a simile is to contribute to emotional suggestiveness. In each case the figure of speech is the same; but the use of it is essentially different. Poets do not "decorate" their poems with figures of speech.

Figures of speech mean, chiefly, the illustration of the unfamiliar or the unknown in terms of the known. Few of us, for example, have seen the sea. But we have all seen a man plough; we have watched with interest as the soil curls up and rolls over from the ploughshare. How shall the poet enable us to get his idea, with its due emotional accompaniment, when he wishes to tell us about a vessel on the sea? He says, simply, "the ship *ploughs* the sea."¹ He does not do that for effect; he does it so that, at once, he may convey an idea and awaken feeling. None of us has seen Wordsworth's "Lucy"; but we may know her as she really was, because we have all seen: —

"A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
— Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky."

So great is the significance of the metaphor

¹ Figures of speech, of course, wear out in time; they become trite. In one sense, all language is metaphorical.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

and the simile in the study of character that a further word must be added. I do not hesitate to say that there is no more certain, unfailing indication of what makes up a person's inner character, of what consistently engages his mind, than the metaphors and similes he uses. Naturally, this is so. For in endeavoring to make the less familiar clear, one turns inevitably to what he best knows; he dips for his material into the well-springs of his personality. What he produces, then, comes from his inmost heart, from the essence of his personality. With all their consummate cleverness, the most able villains in Shakespeare are still unable to avoid this trap. Addressing Laertes, the king in *Hamlet* need use only one figure, indicating his conception of the service of Polonius to the state, and we know him for what he is:—

“The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth.”

One such flash from the poet's pen and we know the king for a physical-minded man, an eater and a drinker. Had Desdemona known the significance for character of figures of speech, she might have averted the tragic ruin that fell upon her and her lord at the hands of Iago. Iago has a mind like a sewer; the images that he uses come

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

from no other source; what he talks of is consistently illustrated, made more familiar, in terms of obscenity. But because he had unction; because of his suavity and grace; because Othello thought he was honest and his friend, this un-failing indication of real content and purpose of character was overlooked, and both Othello and Desdemona went down to a ruin as tragic as it was unnecessary. Even the clever Rosalind unwittingly gives token of her disguised sex when she says, telling Orlando where she lives: "With this shepherdess, my sister; here in the *skirts* of the forest, *like fringe upon a petticoat*"; for no man accustomed to live in the forest would ever dream of using such a figure. It sprang from a woman's inner consciousness.

Why study an evil or failing character?

On first thought, it strikes one as somewhat anomalous that the finest and deepest moral effects produced through the study of poetry should come through the study of evil and failing characters. But, anomalous or not, a moment's reflection convinces one that it is so. Not the perfect characters but the imperfect and evil characters make the deepest appeal; make, indeed, any kind of effective appeal to our imagina-

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

tion and to our moral sense. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, Brutus and Julius Cæsar, Hamlet and Ophelia, Othello and Iago, Satan in *Paradise Lost*, Lancelot and Guinevere, the Duke in *My Last Duchess*, Andrea del Sarto and Lucrezia: all are evil or failing characters, failing rather than inherently evil, no doubt, if we see deep enough,¹ but all alike lacking in precisely those moral qualities which a study of their characters consistently inspires. Why is this?

In the first place, the study of an evil or failing character, artistically presented, calls forth a series of standards in terms of which that character is said to be evil or to have failed. To judge an act as evil or deficient is necessarily to have a standard according to which the judgment is made. If we could not perceive what Macbeth *ought* to have done we could never know that he did wrong; if we could conceive no ideals of which Andrea and Lucrezia fell short, we could find nothing to condemn in their lives. But Shakespeare makes it clear, if it need be made so, that

¹ All the greatest poets, Shakespeare especially, make it evident that ignorance rather than inherent viciousness and degeneracy of man is the fruitful source of error and tragic waste in life. This conviction, consistently implied by the teacher, especially in teaching drama, will be found to have a very real, however subtle, effect upon pupils.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

Macbeth should never have killed his king; and Browning lets us know that Andrea should never have sacrificed his art for an ignoble woman. Each character is so presented by the artist as to make it reasonably evident what the implied ideals are. These intimations of ideals the reader catches and groups together in imagination into a conception of an ideal character.

And there the pleasure lies. Not in what the poet gives us but in what he enables us to do for ourselves do we find delight. Just as the child prefers the rag doll to the doll fully equipped, so the reader prefers the evil or failing character to the perfect character. Each affords more room for the play of imagination. The child does not play with the rag doll; she plays with her imagination; the doll is simply a concrete starting point; the child's imagination joyously calls up images of what the doll is conceived to be — baby, mother, grandparent; the bold outlines of the figure, the lack of detail, leave the imagination unchecked in its play. So the reader of a poem or play does not want a perfect character. That would leave his imagination nothing to supply. He wants the outline, chiefly a negative outline, that will enable him to build up a conception of a character for himself. "Always," if I may quote

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

words that I have used elsewhere, "no matter how perfect in some respect the poetic representation of a thing or person may be, there must be some occasion, some room, for the play of the imagination; there must be some opportunity for the reader to construct for himself, to supplement, to add, to supply almost endlessly out of his own experience; always he must be left free to do more for himself than the poet does for him; and yet to do something which, without the poet's aid, he could by himself never effectively attain."¹

But the reader does more than this. He does something more than find "On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven a perfect round." In the moment of his æsthetic pleasure he *becomes* in imagination the ideal which he has conceived. Let us see how this comes about.

All the standards which any one makes use of . . . are but reflections of his own potential self; they are a part of himself. A standard of feeling, of thought, or of action which any one holds, is something to which he regards himself as at least potentially capable of rising; it is, in the truest sense, a reflection of himself. . . . It is this ideal self that each reader or spectator becomes. So long as he remains in an æsthetic attitude, so long as the flash of pleasure and delight lasts, he actually becomes his ideal and

¹ *The Making of Poetry*, p. 173.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

potential self; he *is* that self which he ideally conceives. The ideal of himself, so vainly and ineffectually pursued in the world of dust and action, suddenly becomes, in imagination, both real and present. The experience may last but for a moment; in any case it must be very short; but for that sweet moment he has held himself at the high level where is

“. . . the most difficult of tasks to *keep*
Heights which the soul is competent to gain.”

In consciousness, in mind and soul, not in reality, not in the world of action as yet, he *is* for the moment his ideal self.¹

The study of an evil or failing character, artistically portrayed, results, then, in the finest moral effects possible through any medium or form of activity. It enables one actually to attain in imagination ideals of character, blurred, dimmed, lost sight of, amid the struggles of daily life or the din of the market-place. This indeed is, in part, the very meaning of poetry to us. Adolescents especially are constantly making and unmaking their ideals of character. The ideals conceived are practically determined by the influences under which the child comes at this formative period. If these influences are inspir-

¹ *The Making of Poetry*, p. 168. On the full significance of this, both for the individual and for society, see *Ibid.*, chapters VI and VII.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

ing, the mind of the boy or girl is moved toward a fine and lofty idealism; if they are commonplace or base, the mind is dragged down. It might seem as if the type of character to be studied in poetry, in order to attain the better end, would be a character which embodied all the virtues of life. But it is not so. No type of character is more efficacious in producing desirable moral effects than the evil or failing character, presented under artistic conditions and in accordance with the laws of art.

*Possible application of a poem*¹

In poetry, as in other things, we find what we bring, receive but what we give. The pupil who

¹ Because of the dangers involved, this section is offered with some trepidation. It should never be forgotten by the teacher of poetry that *the value of poetry is always contained in the experience to which the poetry itself gives rise*, not in some possible moral or practical application of it. If a teacher sees from the glow of a pupil's face that a poem has satisfied the imagination; if she is assured that the pupil's imagery is true and vivid, and his feeling "right," she will do well to let comment and attempted application go. But before she can satisfy the imagination of a pupil, she must often reduce the elements of the poem into terms of the pupil's experience. This may involve going far back into a pupil's life; it will almost certainly involve the asking of many questions, and the calling out of comments to provide for differences in the types of imagery and for varieties of experience among pupils. When the appropriate imagery has been brought into the foreground

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

acknowledged that the study of poetry in high school meant to her a preparation for polite society, simply brought to her study some of the artificial ideas of her home life. Many pupils are only a little less unfortunate. To some, poetry is simply a school task, irksome and annoying. To others, it is a rather unreal thing, pleasant enough to read and even study, but having no very vital connection with life itself, especially with the lives of persons about us as we see them from day to day; it has to do with the far-away, with the remote and the ideal; if it is not precisely something with which to "animate an hour of vacant ease," it is not at least very intimately related to life.

No small part of the task of the teacher of poetry consists in breaking down these false and artificial conceptions, and in helping the pupil to replace them by others more worthy. Poetry

of imagination, the attempt to bring the pupil into a full enjoyment of the poem should be renewed. The teacher of poetry has constantly to work back and forth from imagery to appreciation, from appreciation to imagery. The end of all study of poetry is *the poetic experience*. Any means that is economically helpful in bringing about that experience for the pupil is entirely justifiable. Each teacher must herself be judge of occasions, ways, and means. What is done in these sections is merely suggestive, as many other parts of such a treatise must be.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

becomes a living reality to the pupil, broadens his experience, liberalizes his mind, helps to save his soul indeed, in large part as he comes to conceive worthily of poetry: not only to feel its beauty but also to see that it has practical bearings upon everyday life, that it is a reflection of life, a representation of its eternal laws and of its enduring ideals. Morals can be treated in this way as in no other; for the truth of moral questions is accurately perceived as those questions are seen in the light of æsthetic conditions. Not that poetry should be made didactic and that the teacher should assume the attitude of a moralist; poetry should teach *while* it delights, and the teacher will accomplish most by *not* assuming the attitude of the moralist.

Such questions as, "Have you ever met an Andrea del Sarto in real life? Can you recall one from history? Have you ever seen any one evidently capable of doing fine things who gave them up and let them go for the sake of something that really dragged him down? Did you ever know a very bright pupil who let his study go for the sake of sport or of social life?" bring home to the pupil the theme of the poem with a revealing power of vivid reality. In teaching *Saul*, "All's love, yet all's law" can be made the

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

occasion of an incidental discussion on some laws of physiology and of mental and moral health through which the pupil is much more likely to see the evils of bad habits than he would through a straight lecture on cigarette smoking. Don't preach. Stir a hatred of evil because evil is ugly,¹ and the morals of your pupils will take care of themselves. See clearly that an appreciation of poetry is a more valuable equipment than a code of morals. A teacher of English soon comes to know the strength and weaknesses of the boys and girls in her class. By a look, a comment, a question addressed now to this boy, now to that girl, she can, without any resentment on the part of the pupil, stimulate the acceptance of higher standards of thought and conduct. Boys and girls at this stage are forming their conceptions of the biggest things in life. They resent being preached at; but no one sees the truth as revealed in great poetry more quickly than they do; and,

¹ Cf. Palmer, *The Field of Ethics*, p. 93: "Every one of us finds moral ennoblement in the presence of beauty. . . . A power expulsive of evil resides in the beauty we have been contemplating, and sweeps us away from that pre-occupation with self which is the root of vileness. . . . *If I were a father and were sending my boy from home, I should tremble at his departure if I knew that he had no regard for beauty.*" The italics are mine.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

with few exceptions, no one is more willing or anxious to live these conceptions.

Nor does the teacher always have to draw the conclusions. Read *Andrea del Sarto*; then read *Ulysses*; and the pupils will set up their own ideal at once. Read Wordsworth's *To My Sister*, or Browning's *My Star* or *Prospice* immediately after *Andrea del Sarto*, or institute comparisons among these poems, and no lectures on real womanhood are needed. The discussions that arise from *Rabbi Ben Ezra* will do more to make the students realize that riches do not mean success than forty lectures on service by the preacher. Such discussions require tact, sympathy, and a quick appreciation of the lights and shadows in the pupils' faces. But the consequent remarks overheard in the corridor or the street, snatches of conversation, phrases in themes, as well as the moral tone, deportment, and conduct of pupils,¹ show with what happy frequency the seed has fallen upon fertile ground. It is the realization of being this kind of sower that brings real joy to the life of an English teacher.

¹ See Jastrow's little book, *The Qualities of Men*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York. That sensibility is the measure of the man is the theme.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

Composition and literature

The study of poetry has little to do directly with prose composition. We read poetry for enjoyment; we seek to understand and appreciate the great masterpieces of literature. We read prose, usually, to get information; sometimes we study it for the sake of form. Though the study of poetry will doubtless elevate our diction and refine and cultivate our feelings, it is best, on the whole, to study poetry without much reference to composition. The place and function of poetry differ essentially from the place and function of prose, especially expository prose.

Yet it is possible occasionally to connect the study of poetry with work in composition. Themes constitute a very important part of an English teacher's work. Often the chief difficulty is in finding a motive to write. It may not be amiss to show here how short papers may at times be satisfactorily used in connection with the study of poetry. Short papers are of great value. Their restricted form practically forces the pupil to express himself with special care; and they are a practical aid to the teacher in that they may be quickly read.

A series of short papers followed the study of

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Andrea del Sarto. Among the topics were: "Was Lucrezia the Cause of Andrea's Failure?" and "My Idea of Success." Short sketches of the lives of the four painters mentioned in the poem were written and illustrated by pictures taken from art catalogues and by the Perry Pictures. Such papers grow naturally out of the pupil's experience and knowledge and compel him to organize ideas that might otherwise be vague and fleeting. Two of the papers written are submitted: —

WAS LUCREZIA THE CAUSE OF ANDREA'S FAILURE?

Lucrezia was not the cause of Andrea del Sarto's failure. He failed because he lacked in will power, fortitude, and ambition, the most essential things in the making of a great man.

Andrea did not have enough will power to overcome the temptations that he met in life. He showed this when he stole the gold entrusted to him by King Francis. He shows it, too, when he says: —

"In this world, who can do a thing, will not;
And who would do it, cannot, I perceive."

Andrea tells his wife that, with her help, he might have done better work and accomplished more. But if he himself had possessed more fortitude; if he had not depended on others to help him; if he had taken

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

the battle of life upon his own shoulders, he would have accomplished more than if he had had three women to encourage him.

Then he lacked ambition. At Fontainebleau he had a chance to succeed and become another Raphael, but he would not even finish the work he had started. His refusal to grasp such an opportunity shows a character too lacking in ambition ever to become famous in any work. The same lack of ambition is shown when he says: —

“I feel he laid the fetter: let it lie!”

Andrea's was a plain case of a man who could have done something but would not. And he knew it. He blamed Lucrezia for his failure, but that failure was due entirely to himself.

MY IDEA OF SUCCESS

My idea of a successful life is one in which a man can be happy in old age. To be happy he must have some high ideal to strive for, watch his actions and make truth his steady aim. He must think not only of public fame, but of how he can help his fellow-man. He must be master of his passions. He must not be envious of anyone that is raised by chance to a higher place. He must make his conscience his strong retreat. Although he may not be an owner of lands, he will own himself, and while he seems to have nothing, by being happy he has all.¹

¹ The writer had evidently read Wotton's *Character of a Happy Life*.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Outside reading

At the high-school stage, pupils should do a great deal of outside reading. Many authors, like Dickens and Scott, if not read at this time, are likely never to be read at all. In general, all material assigned for outside reading should be much more simple than the material read in class. Often the mistake is made of assigning for outside reading poems fully as difficult as those read in class. The ideal list is one that begins with poetry and prose of a kind that boys and girls delight in without urging or much explanation, and proceeds by almost imperceptible gradations, year by year, until the mind can understand and enjoy such great works of art as *King Lear* and *In Memoriam*. Beginning, let us say, with Scott and Campbell in poetry, and Stevenson and Brontë in prose, one could pass on to parts of Byron, to Longfellow, and the simpler poems of Tennyson; thence to the light comedies of Shakespeare; and finally to the more serious things of Browning and of Shakespeare. To fail to plan some such course of outside reading for the four years of high-school life is to miss one of the great obvious blessings of this most important period. Such a course is not only ideal; it is entirely feasi-

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

ble, even easy. All that is required is that the necessary books be available — a matter now of very little expense — and that the course be carefully planned.

The motive for doing this outside reading should be not merely the inherent interest of the material itself but the interest awakened in the class-room. The test of outside reading is that it shall lead not only to more reading but to better reading. One high-school boy, I remember to have heard, had read all of Henty's fifty-odd books. But he failed to go on to Stevenson, and never read a line of Meredith or of Hardy. Outside reading should represent means of growth, intellectually and emotionally, as well as means of mere entertainment. Whether it affords means of growth is the real test of its worth. It should never be difficult enough to repel pupils, yet it should have substance enough to enable the youth to stretch his mind a little.

An effective means of getting this motive to work is to assign for outside reading some of the more difficult poems of an author, after the pupil has been safely launched in the study of that author and has gained some intelligent, guiding conceptions. After reading several of Browning's poems carefully in class, pupils will read with

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

avidity such a poem as *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*, especially if the teacher tells the story in advance. We all love a story, but boys and girls at the high-school age are especially responsive to a story well told. Often this task of telling the story of a poem in advance can be delegated in turn to the more capable pupils. That the best pupils can read a poem in advance and give a good account of it is a helpful guaranty to others that it can be done successfully by pupils as well as by the teacher. Incidentally, the pupils who are selected to tell a story get some excellent practice in organization of material and in oral delivery, and the others are stirred with a spirit of emulation to be put in the selected class. The requirement to be made in giving an account of a poem, play, story, essay, or whatever it may be, is this: Give such an account of this piece of literature as you would to one unfamiliar with it whom you wished to interest in it and have read it.

A great deal of this kind of work can be done incidentally. Pupils should be stimulated to go beyond the prescribed list. No teacher can ever tell when a seed may strike fertile soil, and it *may* spring into fruits richer by far than those forced into growth in the heat of the class-room. Not so much what pupils read in class as what they read

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

out of class sinks deep into their lives with shaping and formative influence. The supreme test of the class-work of any teacher of literature is: What do your pupils read in their leisure hours? The mind can be driven in the class-room; it can be forced to learn things; but that is not life. The real life of the mind is seen in what it does in a voluntary and unconscious way. It is to reach this real life of the mind through the means of class-instruction that the teacher of literature should constantly strive. Only as this end is attained is the teaching of literature truly successful. And so it will be well constantly to give informal aspects to the work. "Did you ever read *The Cloister and the Hearth* by Charles Reade? You have n't? Well, don't begin it in the evening, for if you do you will sit up all night to finish it." "If any one of you boys has not read Stevenson's *Black Arrow*, he has missed — to use the term one of the boys used the other day — a ripping¹ story." "If any one of you girls has not read Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, she has missed a most interesting story." "There's a fine poem

¹ Is it necessary to say that the use of slang by the teacher of English especially is in general to be studiously avoided? Yet many a boy will be stimulated to read something simply through the teacher's occasional use of his own language.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

to read." These and like statements made by the teacher from time to time will be the means of stimulating pupils to read a great deal that they would otherwise miss altogether. Occasionally it will be well to take an hour off just to read something to the class. Don't fear that you are losing time; you are probably gaining it. What you are dealing with, after all, is life, not poetry. You probably accomplish least when you work hardest with conscious aim and purpose. Try, for example, Tolstoy's masterly little story, *The Long Exile*. It may take twenty minutes, but it may start some pupil reading, too, and bring him for the rest of his life under the spell of Tolstoy's inspiring idealism. Who that loves literature does not recall, with pleasure and delight, hours when the teacher took a period off just to read something to the class? Who that teaches literature does not know that these were hours of soul-stirring effect, when many a class-hour's work was dull and lifeless?

Library facilities are often very poor, but in these days of cheap books a great deal can be done with even a few dollars. Give lists of books to the pupils; group books suitable for each class on a special shelf in the library; stimulate pupils to buy books for themselves; bring to the atten-

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

tion of individual pupils books suited to their needs or tastes; as frequently as possible hold five to ten-minute informal exercises in which pupils tell of the most interesting book, poem, or play they have read in the past month; post lists, prepared by pupils, of the books read each month by each class; make the class-requirements in the way of reports and notebooks as informal as possible, otherwise you are likely to deaden the interest; give evidence yourself of a lively, sympathetic interest in what is being read, and you will be surprised at the amazing amount of material that even pupils with the reputation of being dull and lethargic can be induced to read.¹

¹ See *Report of the Committee on Home Reading*, National Council of Teachers of English, 68th Street and Stewart Avenue, Chicago.

Also, *Books for Boys and Girls*, approved by the Brooklyn Public Library for use in its Children's Rooms. Published by the Brooklyn Public Library, 1911. If it is not out of print, a copy will be sent on request.

Also, *List of Textbooks, English Classics, Reference Books and Supplementary Reading*, authorized by the Board of Education for use in the public schools of St. Louis. Compiled by J. A. Long, Supply Commissioner, January, 1909.

Also, *Books for Boys and Girls*, in A Selected List of Books, recommended by the Ontario Library Association. Published quarterly. Apply to E. A. Hardy, Secretary of the Ontario Library Association, 81 Collier Street, Toronto, Canada.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Sight work

An admirable exercise in the study of poetry is the use of sight work. To be able to tell a poor poem from a good one without help of any kind, without knowing even the name of the author, is to be able to read poetry with true understanding and genuine appreciation. Tastes differ, "the doctors" differ; but there are poems, even of a simple kind, of unquestioned worth and beauty. To have pupils pick these out from others, even to have them pick out lines and phrases of special beauty, is a most helpful exercise in the study of poetry, and one, moreover, that pupils find exhilarating and enjoyable. In this way pupils soon get rid of the idea that a teacher or any other person who knows good poetry has some hidden secret in his art; they come to see that the only means of coming to know good poetry is to read good poetry, to steep one's self in it until one is able to recognize intuitively its distinctive quality.

A special stimulus may be given to this work by framing such a question as the following: If it were necessary to select one of the following poems for publication on the ground of poetical merit, which one would you choose? One of them is nonsense.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

- (a) Orpheus with his lute made trees,
And the mountain-tops that freeze,
 Bow themselves, when he did sing:
To his music plants and flowers
Ever sprung, as sun and showers
 There had made a lasting Spring.

Every thing that heard him play,
Even the billows of the sea,
 Hung their heads, and then lay by.
In sweet music is such art,
Killing care and grief of heart
 Fall asleep, or hearing, die.

- (b) How happy to defend our heart,
When Love has never thrown a dart!
But ah! unhappy when it bends,
If pleasure her soft bliss suspends!
Sweet in a wild disordered strain,
A lost and wandering heart to gain!
Oft in mistaken language wooed
The skillful lover's understood.

- (c) He saw alone the star that lured him on,
 And with his rapt eyes turned from earthly ways,
He followed where that astral wanderer shone,
 Illumined, yet illusioned, by its rays.

Blame not his errant feet, that idly fell
 On more than one poor flower in passing by:
Enough to know those wandering feet as well
 Smote stone and flower alike unconsciously; —

Enough that we, who dream amid the dust,
 Were wakened by his momentary flight,

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

When down our calmer ways was blown a gust
Of song that woke reverberating Night.

Ah! happier treaders of earth's lower ways,
Who pace smooth paths with less impetuous beat;
Since he would climb where ye can only gaze,
One moment pity his impatient feet!

Other typical questions that may properly be asked in connection with sight work are as follows: —

1. Give a suitable title to the poem.
2. In a single sentence, state its theme.
3. State concisely the substance of each stanza.
4. In one paragraph, give an outline of the thought contained in the poem.
5. Simplify the expressions you find obscure.
6. Make a list, with brief comments, of the more significant or striking words of the poem.
7. Point out passages in which the music of the verse seems to accord with the subject-matter in an especially happy way.
8. Describe the verse-form.
9. Pick out passages suitable for memorizing.
10. The poet's imagination is constantly finding analogies or similarities between the world of mind and the external world: seeing deep truth in the world of nature: illustrate from the poem given you.

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

Dramatization and other means of cultivating interest

In recent years dramatization has taken a prominent place in connection with the study of poetry in the high school. Dramatization has its advantages; it has, too, its disadvantages. It is an excellent means of enforcing a study of historical background. For a knowledge of costumes, manners and customs, sports and pastimes, prevalent in a period, nothing will effect more than dramatization. Not infrequently, too, the unimaginative pupil, dull and apathetic in class, will become vitally interested in what he is studying when he is given an opportunity to act out some part. Moreover, it should never be forgotten that a great deal of the poetry we study deals with scenes and situations with which most of us are unfamiliar. Many passages in Wordsworth can mean little to a boy who has lived all his life on the plains, or to a girl who has never seen a lake or a mountain. At the best, any poem on the skylark can mean little to one who has not heard the wonderful song of that little bird. Ways and means, accordingly, must often be devised whereby poetry shall take on the necessary touch of reality. Dramatization is one of

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

these. If the grotesque and farcical elements of attempted dramatization can with reasonable success be eliminated; if pupils, even while they enjoy themselves, can be induced to make an earnest effort toward truthful representation; dramatization can be made an effective aid to the study of poetry. Words accompanied by action take on fresh meaning for those who attempt to represent their content; and for those who do not act, a further help toward clear visualization of imagery and comprehension is usually gained. Judiciously and discreetly handled, dramatization may be made a very real aid in the study of poetry in the high school.

The chief disadvantage and the chief danger is that teacher and pupils alike may come to mistake dramatic representation for the study of poetry itself. At its best, dramatization is only a further motive for study; it may be little more than an interesting kind of activity suggested by a poem or play. In studying *Andrea del Sarto*, for example, it would be quite possible to stimulate an imaginative realization of Browning's meager suggestions of scene and situation by having the scene represented by pupils. But apart from getting the lines memorized by those who compete for a place — and there always should

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

be competition — it is to be questioned whether the result would justify the effort. There is a mistaken notion abroad in the land that we enjoy only what we see and hear. The notion is an offshoot of an unconscious kind of laziness. Perhaps the most energetic people, we Americans are yet imaginatively lazy. We hate to use our imaginations. We want our books and our newspapers, even our short stories, profusely illustrated. Pure description we will not read. A play must be put on with the last detail of realistic presentation; nothing must be left to imagination. But this is all or half wrong. The barrenness of the Elizabethan stage forced writer and audience alike to “work their minds,” and they got more out of the play in consequence than we do. They were like the child with the rag doll. All they needed was a starting-point, and they reveled in the glories of the imagination. Dramatization in high school, involving, as it does, a great deal of work on the part of teacher and pupil, often involves an expenditure of time and energy quite disproportionate to the pedagogical advantages gained. Properly started and stimulated, the average high-school pupil will get more real enjoyment out of seeing things in his mind’s eye than he will from having them somewhat

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

crudely presented before him. Ultimately the teacher's task lies more in stimulating imaginative activity than it does in planning dramatic presentations.

Dramatization of plays is, of course, the most justifiable of all efforts of this kind. In the teaching of Shakespeare especially, the teacher should remind the pupils constantly that the plays were written to be acted, not primarily to be read. Constant reference to the stage, and a stimulus toward imaginative realization of what an actor would probably do, are often a very great help. Suggestions of this kind can be made the more effective when there is the prospect of actual presentation to conclude the study. But even more helpful, perhaps, as a means of aiding the pupil to a full and rich realization of what a play is, is to have him do some original work himself. Any pupil who has ever attempted to write a single scene for a play, however simple, will from that time have not only a deeper respect for those who wrote great plays; he will have also an insight into the conditions essential to the making of a good play that no amount of instruction could ever impart. There is even a further gain. To the average high-school pupil, a great deal of literature is likely to smack of artificiality. It

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

seems to him an unreal, almost an unnatural thing. Some first-hand attempts at composition will do a great deal toward removing this erroneous impression. Many a pupil, through a few exercises of this sort, may have his mind cleared of notions against which even an able teacher would have to struggle, and struggle in vain, for months, perhaps for years.

Just as there is a certain kind of dramatization that may be effectively used in high school work, so there is a certain use that can be made of actual objects referred to constantly in poetry. *The Chambered Nautilus* will forever take on a different meaning once the pupil has seen the shell of a nautilus. The study of practically all poets can be vitalized and made more interesting through the judicious use of objects. A twig, a leaf, a bud, brought to class will often give the right start to the study of a nature poem. A like use may be made of pictures. A set of the Perry Pictures¹ is almost invaluable for illustrative purposes, and the cost is very small. Here as before, how-

¹ Lantern slides are still better. Nothing is more effective as a means of giving pupils a background for the study of the poetry of England. Good slides can be obtained at a shilling each from Newton & Co., 37 King Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C., England. The cost of a lantern unfortunately precludes the use of slides in most high schools.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

ever, it is well to keep in mind that the concrete thing presented to the eye is but an aid to imagination. It is but a starting-point for fuller, richer, and truer visualization than would perhaps be otherwise possible. The more nearly we duplicate the imagery that was in the author's mind when he wrote, the more nearly we shall understand his language and appreciate his poem. With the fundamental imagery wrong, it is idle to talk of understanding or enjoying poetry. No time is ever wasted, no amount of effort is too great, to insure as near as may be a duplication in the child's imagination of the imagery that stood out before the imagination of the poet. This done, other things will largely take care of themselves. Yet it is entirely possible that one may, through unfortunate choice of poem, or some other unfavorable circumstance, spend so much time in getting a motive for the study of a poem and in stimulating an imaginative realization of its imagery as never to arrive at the poem itself. Once more the teacher's problem resolves itself into a question of judgment and common sense.

Review and examination questions

One of the most helpful means of bringing pupils to a satisfactory stage of preparation is

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

the use of review questions. For those teachers who still believe in examinations — and what better safeguard against loose and slovenly work in literature has any one yet found? — nothing can be much more helpful, both for teacher and pupil, than the preparation of a thoroughly comprehensive set of review questions on all the work done, with the emphasis thrown upon points brought out in class.

Experience has shown that pupils take up with the scheme eagerly. Instead of being left to flounder amid a mass of seemingly endless material, they have a definite basis for review. They review with much greater confidence than would otherwise be possible. The teacher's assurance that the examination will be based directly upon the questions given is a further stimulus for work. Incidentally, the teacher shifts much of the responsibility to the pupil, where it ought, under right conditions, to be. The teacher need have no apprehension about drawing some of the examination questions verbatim from the list, and of basing others directly upon it.

Giving out review questions of this kind makes scarcely any appreciable change in the class grades, except that two or three are above the line who would otherwise be below; but the

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

significant fact is that *the class as a whole learns just about twice as much as it would if left to plan its own reviewing*. The results in actual knowledge are double what they are likely to be under any other plan. Moreover, every one comes from the work in a better frame of mind. The pupil glows in his inner consciousness with a fine sense of mastery and of obligation satisfactorily performed. The examination has left no brown-paper taste in his mouth; he still likes poetry. There has been a fairness in imposing this task upon him which is happily in accord with the ideals set up in the study of poetry in class: the teacher seems to aim at living what she teaches; poetry *has* something to do with life, even in an unsuspected quarter. Even the dullard acknowledges that his failure is "all his own fault." How can he do otherwise? Every one was assured that, if he could answer the questions in the review-set, he could pass the examination; the questions were based on the work done in and out of class; there can be no excuse for any one. It is the weak pupils who always make the trouble at the close of the work; by this means the teacher may free herself of a series of troublesome problems.

In order to give some idea of the character of

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

question that might satisfactorily be used, I shall submit a few typical questions on *Andrea del Sarto*; the type of question that pupils who took part in the exercise presented would be expected to answer: —

1. State the circumstances under which Browning came to write *Andrea del Sarto*.
2. What does Andrea's name literally mean?
3. Who was John Kenyon and what was his relation to the Brownings?
4. In a single sentence, state the theme of the poem.
5. In one carefully written paragraph, give a short description of the character of Andrea; the same for Lucrezia.
6. Give a careful description of the place where Andrea and Lucrezia are when the poem opens.
7. Name some of the painters mentioned in the poem.
Mention one painting by each. Give a very brief description of it.
8. What is the verse-form of *Andrea del Sarto*?
How do you account for the colloquial effect of the language?
9. Quote ten consecutive lines of the poem.
10. State clearly the ideals of life that Browning

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

brings out in this poem, referring to passages and situations in support of your statements.

11. What is Browning's doctrine about imperfection? How does he seem to justify it, both for this life and for the next?
12. Locate the following passages, indicating the part of the poem (or naming the poem, as it will be in some cases) from which they are taken; give the general connection; and explain very carefully all words or passages in italics: —

(a) " My face, *my moon*, *my everybody's moon*,
Which everybody looks on and calls his,
And, I suppose, is looked on by in turn,
While she looks — no one's."

Such questions are only typical. Each teacher can readily make out a set adapted to the class and to the poetry studied. It will be entirely safe to mark certain questions, such as nine and twelve, as certain to appear on the final examination. This further assurance is stimulating for the best pupils, finally condemnatory of those who fail. There is absolutely no excuse for any pupil who does not know something when he has been told that it would be asked on the examination. Question twelve is the type of question that always draws the line of distinction between the

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

best pupils and the others. All the questions given for review or for examination fall naturally into two groups: those which involve specific, definite, and accurate information; those which involve a knowledge of more general matters, such as the theme or problems of a poem. The average student will answer the second type satisfactorily, and he will answer some part of the first; the best student only is able to answer both types of question satisfactorily.

Experience shows that this scheme, under proper administration, never leads to difficulties. It may look like giving the whole situation away in advance, but such a notion arises from inexperience or from a wrong notion about examinations. Why should the teacher want to keep *anything* back before examinations? The value of the examination lies principally in the systematic review which it enforces; beyond that it effects little. Any plan which will double the results from that review is to be desired; any plan which will even do away with much of the mental distress incident to the examination period is to be desired; but a plan that will relieve the teacher of burdens of responsibility; that will help to keep the relation between the teacher and pupil cordial; that will permit the pupil to leave his

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

class dominated by an unavoidable sense of fair play; that will, above all, send him out equipped with twice the knowledge and appreciation that he might otherwise have, is a plan that no teacher can well afford to neglect. It may not work for all, but in the plan outlined I believe there are the possibilities of such a working scheme.

The enjoyment of poetry in its relation to hard work

The true enjoyment of poetry and hard work go hand in hand. Popular conception, in and out of school, is likely to be to the contrary. Everybody reads; everybody is in some sense a student of literature; and the end sought by all is immediate pleasure, free from effort. And there is such a thing as a kind of pleasant and harmless browsing on the hillsides of literature; there is a kind of literature that yields a mild, narcotic pleasure; there is even a kind of poetry that, comes near the class of push-pin, bowling, and golf; affords a mild tonic of mental recreation; and produces pleasing forgetfulness of one's creditors and of the stings of the world. With just these conceptions the high-school pupil may come to his task. He may think that he must find immediate pleasure in everything he reads. If poetry is something to be enjoyed, there should be no hard work;

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

tasks should be easy, assignments light. Moreover, the teacher's aim to produce pleasure through poetry seems to indorse the view.

But this popular conception of the study of poetry is, of course, wrong. Poetry is not froth, nor is it yet the fumes of wine. Its end is pleasure; but the pleasure is of the kind that comes, in all worthy poetry, only after effort and hard work. *The true study of good poetry demands a higher and fuller exercise of our faculties than any other pursuit or activity.* Most pursuits and activities, science, business, and the like, appeal but to one side of man's nature; poetry appeals to the whole man, involves the whole man. Poetry is a discipline, intellectually and emotionally, as rigid as science; it demands nicer moral discrimination than man is called upon to exercise in any other sphere of activity; it sets standards of action to which man, in his daily life, consistently fails to attain. The pleasure of poetry is refined and elevated. It differs from the pleasure of the soda-fountain or the moving-picture show; it cannot, like these, be gathered by the casual passer-by, even as he plucks the obvious berry on the bush. Were it not so, *the study of poetry in the high school could not be justified.* We work in order to gain a high pleasure. We work because we cannot gain

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

that high pleasure without work. The true enjoyment of poetry demands effort, steadiness of purpose, sometimes even pain, to achieve it. Learning, said Aristotle, is painful; and the adage is true even of poetry. Not that pain of mental effort and hard work should be deliberately sought out by the teacher, of course; pupils are not necessarily learning anything, or growing in power, or deepening their enjoyment merely because they are working hard. But they cannot grow in power; they cannot win heights of higher pleasure in poetry; they cannot come to know good poetry for what it really is, without effort and hard work. The true enjoyment of good poetry lies beyond the hills of effort.

Some of the reasons why this is so have already been glanced at. That the experience — thought, feeling, or action — dealt with by the poem commonly lies beyond the present attainment of the pupil is itself sufficient cause for work. Time and effort are needed to grasp the true poet's conception. But even this can be done only after one has understood the poet's language; and that language, we have seen, is rare and unusual; the poet expresses his ideas in novel and distinctive ways. Then, the poet's language is emotionally suggestive. Even the man rich in experience

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

cannot fathom or exhaust the lines of the great poet. The longer he dwells upon them, the more he finds. What he finds is not merely what is directly expressed; it lies between the lines. In all great poetry, more lies between the lines than in the lines themselves. And it is there that the true reader finds most. He discovers images, finds thoughts, catches feelings, gathers intimations of action for which there is no definite token in the language of the poem; yet all this is there; it is the "unexpressed content" of the mind of the poet, the unrevealed part of the poem that possessed his mind as he wrote; it is not a mere reading in from without. To catch the poet's conception, to understand his language, to read between the lines in poetry takes time, effort, hard work.

But there are certain more special reasons why the true enjoyment of poetry is inseparable from hard work. To begin with, mere remoteness in time means increased difficulty in reading. The further back one goes, the greater becomes the task of rehabilitating the language of the poet; of finding, not our meaning, but the poet's own meaning in the word he used. To understand accurately what the poet says, the historical setting must, in some measure, be reproduced. ✓

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

Manners and customs were perhaps different in his day; many words carried a meaning even opposite to what they now carry; life was viewed from a different angle. Shakespeare's plays contain thousands of references, commonly in the form of figures of speech, to a sport long since obsolete — hawking; and often, to know what Shakespeare says, is to know the practices of hawking. To read Pope aright, to understand and enjoy, for example, his *Rape of the Lock*, one must know the social and literary ideals that animated that period, so different from our own. The delights of Chaucer, his unexcelled portraiture of character, his sly irony, his subtle humor, all must be lost to any one unwilling to go through the effort of mastering the elements, at least, of the English of that day. Historical remoteness means work, if we are to read our poets with intelligent understanding.

Then, poets are commonly learned men. If they are not always scholars in the academic sense of the word, they do know a great deal about a surprising number of things. Gray is said to have been the most learned man of his day. Milton knew his Bible and his classics so well that he referred to characters, situations, and ideals in them with as much familiarity and

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

facility as the modern boy reels off the names of the members of his baseball team. And so it takes work, and hard work, too, to master in class a poem like *Lycidas* or *L'Allegro*, as any teacher who has tried it knows. Sometimes, as in the case of Browning, much of the learning is highly specialized. Browning deals primarily with men and women. But his men and women differ from the men and women of Burns and of Wordsworth. They are specialists: painters, sculptors, artists of one kind and another. And often, as in the case of our class-exercise, one must know something about these people, not merely as types of humanity, but as specialists, in order to understand Browning's poetry. Not to have this information is often to be repelled in the outstart. Similarly, much of Tennyson's poetry must be dead to one who knows nothing about the classics. That poets have wide knowledge, often highly specialized knowledge, involves work, even hard work, for the high-school pupil.

Involved in this attempt to rehabilitate the historical conditions of a period and to become familiar with the poets' wider range of knowledge is a further demand. He who reads poetry with understanding and appreciation must escape from

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

himself, must break away from the narrow and conventional ideas that dominate his everyday actions. If he reads Wordsworth prompted by the aim of finding something that will help him in advertising, he will never, of course, really understand and appreciate Wordsworth. Incidentally, he will probably miss the truth in advertising. The poet's view differs from that of the average man. It is free from considerations of self-interest, immediate service, use, and ownership. It is higher, truer, more worthy. And to see it and grasp it involves a self-abandon, a sympathy, and an imaginative realization of image and idea that can come only through a lofty and elevated kind of effort. It is no easy task to come into full sympathy and appreciative understanding of the life and expression of a people remote in time from our own, one inspired by different national and social ideals. Nothing is more difficult for the mind that is undisciplined.

Yet just there the task lies. To understand and enjoy the poetry of another people, the true reader *must* get beyond the petty circle of his own life. He must see life through the eyes of the people whose poetry he reads. No other line of study, no other kind of activity, makes so wide

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

and varied demands as does the study of poetry. It is not sufficient, as in science, to have proved that an idea is true or false; one must know where it comes from. We hear a good deal these days about culture; we are even told that if we read poetry we shall get culture. In the minds of many people, this kind of culture suggests pretty ways of speech, or good clothes, or weak vertebræ. The most distinctive mark of the cultured mind is the ability to take another person's point of view; to put one's self in another's place, and see life and its problems from a point of view different from one's own. To be willing to test a new idea; to be able to live on the edge of difference in all matters intellectual; to examine, without heat, the burning questions of the day; to have imaginative sympathy, openness and flexibility of mind, steadiness and poise of feeling, cool calmness of judgment, is to have culture. No study, no kind of activity contributes as much towards the attainment of this state — this capacity for "other-mindedness" — as does poetry. Grossly as the statement that the study of poetry gives culture is misunderstood and misapplied, it is profoundly true. But it is the kind of internal culture that cannot be bought by the yard at the haberdasher's. National aims,

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

conceptions, and ideals; ethical values; types of emotional experience; ends of practical achievement — these it is the true reader of poetry, even the pupil in high school, must in some measure apprehend, understand, and make his own before he reads poetry with understanding and enjoyment.

The final reason why the high enjoyment of poetry involves work is the deepest of all. To enjoy poetry is to know life on its best side, and to know life is the last result of supreme effort. It is the highest type of knowledge. High school pupils can be expected to make only a start in the deeper knowledge of life, and yet if they are to make a start at all they must put forth effort; they must do some hard thinking, gain new types of emotional experience, conceive higher ideals of life and conduct. To read poetry aright, to win its finest pleasures, to come into the satisfying knowledge of what is best in life, the mind of the pupil must be kept active, keen-edged, and tense. The serious study of Shakespeare, that which seeks the highest pleasure, will quite properly result in an occasional headache. No poetry truly worthy of the name reveals its secret of joy without time and effort. Not one reading, not even twenty, may suffice. Songs we may except

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

again, perhaps. Time and effort, and that of the highest order; strong and clear grasp of intellect; play of feeling; judgment in morals; gathering up of memories; grouping of impressions; reshaping and projecting of ideals, are all involved in the arduous task of the true study of poetry. Poetry is an expression of life. To know poetry is to know life. No knowledge is more worthy; none more difficult to attain. The laws of personality are inscrutable; they operate imperceptibly. In comparison, the laws of physical and biological science are relatively simple. Science is the attempted description of that side of life which is primarily physical; art is the *only* adequate representation of the activities of the inner life. Poetry is a revelation of the laws of personality; it deals with the inner life of man, with the laws of his being. Only through repeated readings, through the gradual mastery of some of the fundamental things in life, will many a poem unfold its secret. Not until then will it afford the high enjoyment, the elevated and refined feelings, which it was designed to produce.

If the serious pursuit of poetry involves effort; if to gain high pleasure from poetry there must be hard work, how much, then, the teacher of poetry in the high school may properly ask,

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

should I actually undertake to read? It is difficult, if not impossible, to say. Much depends upon the teacher, upon the enthusiasm, interest, and eagerness for the study of poetry she is able to inspire. The best year that the writer spent in the study of poetry in high school was spent on just thirty-six of Wordsworth's poems, ten of them sonnets. The best days were those on which the teacher read a line of a poem, laid down his book, and led an animated discussion for the hour. As the truth and beauty of some profound idea was gradually unfolded, the scales of partial blindness fell from our eyes; inviting areas in life, hitherto unguessed at, were opened up; worlds undreamt of were happily discovered. But there was hard work. Every line, every word, was discussed and worked over again and again; every poem in the book was memorized; the examinations were the hardest in the school. Yet enthusiasm for literature ran so high in that school, there was such a ready response in bringing up assignments, that other teachers had a task to get their work done. Many a pupil here got his "start" in poetry; some went on to the writing of it; others to the teaching of it. In another school that recently came under the writer's observation the three-hundred-odd pages

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

of Matthew Arnold's selections from Wordsworth were read in three weeks. In such a case the mere number of poems seems to insure defeat in the main aim. To the writer, the list prescribed for "college entrance requirements" seems excessive, if the best results are to be obtained. Uneven preparation of pupils, inadequate equipment of libraries, the demands of those "higher up," and other varying conditions make it impossible everywhere to seek to accomplish a uniform amount of work. Of one thing we may be sure: haste is waste. Better a little well done than quantities read superficially. Some intensive reading, much rapid, general reading, might be the rule. To go galloping through the ages is to get only a blurred view of the literary landscape. In reading poetry, to fail to take time to apprehend the poet's thoughts and to experience his emotion is to miss the end of all the study. Better to read one book or one poem in a year, and do it thoroughly, than to read a hundred carelessly and superficially. Not the reading of many books but the manner of reading a few makes the difference between true study and false study. What I have quoted Ruskin as saying,¹ seems to me to be entirely sound.

¹ See page xii.

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

To understand what great poets say and to enjoy what they offer means effort and hard work. But it is a kind of effort and hard work that brings deep satisfaction. It is a fundamental mistake to read only that which is immediately pleasant to us. Sustained effort, hard work, habits of thoroughness and accuracy will themselves help to contribute a lively interest to the study of poetry; self-indulgence, the pursuit of an immediate sensuous pleasure, mental habits of laxity and superficiality, will finally kill not only immediate appreciation, but all the finer kinds of feeling which poetry, rightly studied, invariably yields.

Poetry and the teaching of poetry

To teach poetry is to add to the enjoyment of life. Poetry has one great central theme: the happiness of man; and poets have one common object: to share with their fellowmen the joys they find in life. Poets aim at affording a refined and elevated kind of pleasure. They discover and unfold unsuspected values in life. They offer consolation in sorrow, fresh hope in disheartenment, an added joy to happiness. As they sharpen the edge of tragedy in life, they deepen our sense of what is good. Poetry develops man's

SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

mental and spiritual nature. It awakens him to what life really is; brings into fuller clearness his relation to the world; extends his intellectual horizon; cultivates and refines his sensibilities; broadens and steadies his moral nature. It opens up an ever-widening path of progress. It begins precisely where life falls off and fails; completes its partial achievements; reconciles its failures; carries it on to successful issue; and reveals the grounds of true success in a concrete way by presenting the inevitable and necessary ends of conduct. Poetry is a storehouse of wisdom. Through it one may come to know life for what it really is. With greater assurance of success than one can well have otherwise, one may arm one's self for the battle of life. Poetry offers to man a permanent possession of an ever-present and easily accessible source of loftiest stimulus and highest enjoyment of all that is best in life.

To teach poetry is to pass on to others something of this best in life. It is to idealize the real; add to it the touch of inspiration. It is to be the living voice for what the poet says. It is to be the humanized form — faintly, imperfectly, it is true, but still of necessity the humanized form — of what poets contribute to life. All that is best in life is the poetry of it. To understand and ap-

POETRY IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

preciate poetry is to understand and appreciate life on its best side, nothing less. To teach poetry is to clear the path and open up the way for those who do not know and have not seen the best there is in life. It is to throw the searchlight of truth upon the highways of thought and character. It is to reveal the true ends of living, the chief values in life. It is to unfold the beauty of the commonplace and in the life of man. It is to study the patterns of what life may be and ought to be. To teach poetry is to help the growing and developing mind more truly to understand life; to be alive to its realities and its opportunities; and to perceive its capacity for affording refined and elevated pleasure. It is to enable such a mind temporarily to realize in imagination unsuspected ideals, undivined forms of feeling, desirable kinds of action, eternal types of moral value. In a smaller and fainter way, to teach poetry is to do with poetry what poetry itself does for life: add to the joy of living.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

A BIBLIOGRAPHY, especially pedagogical, but now out of date, will be found in Carpenter, Baker, and Scott's *The Teaching of English*, Longmans, New York, 1907. The following list, chiefly non-pedagogical in character, is intended to be merely suggestive to the teacher. For the sake of convenience I have listed some books and essays as indispensable, others as recommended:—

I. INDISPENSABLE

- ARNOLD, M., *The Study of Poetry*. In his *Essays in Criticism*, Macmillan, New York, \$1.50; also introduction to Ward's *English Poets*, vol. 1, \$1.00.
- BUTCHER, S. H., *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art*, Macmillan, New York. \$4.00. The essays by Professor Butcher are especially helpful. All literary criticism may be said to go back to Aristotle.
- COLERIDGE, S. T., *Biographia Literaria* (Everyman's Library), Dutton, New York. Especially chapters IV, XIV, XVII, XVIII, XIX, XXII, 35c.
- LESSING, *Laocoön*. Translated with preface and notes by R. Phillimore. Routledge, London; Dutton, New York. 50c. Another translation by E. C. Beasley. Bell, London, 3/6.
- MILL, J. S., *Dissertations and Discussions*. The chapter, "Thoughts on Poetry and its Varieties."

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- Routledge, London, 50c; Dutton, New York. New Universal Library, 1/. Almost everything that Mill has written is worth reading.
- SHELLEY, *A Defence of Poetry*, in *Essays and Letters*, Walter Scott, London. 1/.
- SIDNEY, *The Defense of Poesy*, edited by A. S. Cook, Ginn, Boston. 65c.
- WORDSWORTH, *Preface to the Second Edition of the Lyrical Ballads*.
Preface to the Edition of 1815, with the Supplementary Essay. In any complete Wordsworth. Edited by Knight, Macmillan, New York. \$1.50 per vol. Also, *Wordsworth's Literary Criticism*, edited by N. Smith, Oxford Press, American Branch, New York. 75c.

II. RECOMMENDED

- ALDEN, R. M., *English Verse*, Holt & Co.; New York, \$1.25. A helpful book.
- BARBE, WAITMAN, *Famous Poems Explained*, Hinds, Noble and Eldredge, New York, 1909. \$1.00.
Great Poems Interpreted, Hinds, Noble and Eldredge, New York, 1914. \$1.00.
- BATES, ARLO, *Talks on the Teaching of Literature*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York. \$1.30. Chapter VIII is especially valuable.
Talks on the Study of Literature, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York. \$1.50.
- BEECHING, H. C. *The Study of Poetry*, Cambridge University Press. 2/. Brief but good.
- BENNETT, ARNOLD, *Literary Taste and How to Form*

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- It*, Doran & Co., New York, 1910. 75c. Suggestive in many ways. Contains a list of essential books, called An English Library, divided into four periods.
- BRADLEY, A. C., *Oxford Lectures on Poetry*, Macmillan, New York. \$3.00. One of the most important lectures, "Poetry for Poetry's Sake," is also published in pamphlet form and sells for 35c. Oxford Press, American Branch, New York.
- Shakespearean Tragedy: Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth*. Macmillan, New York. \$3.25. Indispensable to any one who is teaching Shakespeare.
- BRIGHT and MILLER, *The Elements of English Versification*, Ginn, Boston. 80c. Brief and elementary.
- BUTCHER, S. H., *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*, Macmillan, New York. \$2.50. The chapters, "The Written and the Spoken Word," "The Unity of Learning," and "The Dawn of Romanticism in Greek Poetry."
- CORSON, H., *The Aims of Literary Study*, Macmillan, New York. 75c. Very suggestive.
- The Voice and Spiritual Education*, Macmillan, New York. 75c. Should be in the hands of every teacher of poetry.
- A Primer of English Verse*, Ginn, New York. \$1.00. Deals with verse chiefly in its æsthetic and organic character.
- DOWDEN, E., *New Studies in Literature*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York. \$2.25. The chapter, "The Teaching of English Literature."

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- Transcripts and Studies*, Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., London. \$2.25. The chapter, "The Interpretation of Literature."
- Encyclopædia Britannica*, Article, "Poetry." Cambridge University Press. Good to begin with.
- EMERSON, R. W., *Essays*, Second Series, "The Poet." Crowell, New York. 60c.
- FAIRCHILD, A. H. R., *The Making of Poetry*, Putnam's, New York, 1912. \$1.50. Gives the writer's conception of the processes involved in the making of poetry, of its nature, the need and value of it, and its chief forms.
- HAZLITT, WILLIAM, *On Poetry in General*. In Hazlitt's *Works*, 3/6 each, or *Hazlitt on English Literature*, by Jacob Zeitlin, Oxford Press, American Branch, New York, \$1.25.
- HUNT, LEIGH, *An Answer to the Question "What is Poetry,"* edited by A. S. Cook, Ginn, Boston. 50c.
- HYDE, WILLIAM DE WITT, *The Teacher's Philosophy in and out of School*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, New York and Chicago. Riv. Ed. Mon. 35c. Has nothing directly to do with poetry, but no teacher can afford to neglect this little book.
- The Five Great Philosophies of Life*, Macmillan, New York. \$1.50. A fuller statement, worth while to any teacher.
- MACKAIL, J. W., *Lectures on Poetry*, Longmans, Green & Co., New York. \$3.00.
- PALMER, G. H., *The Ideal Teacher*, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, New York and Chicago. Riv. Ed.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Mon. 35c. Just as important and valuable as Hyde's little book.

The Field of Ethics, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston and New York. \$1.10. Especially the chapter, "Ethics and Æsthetics." An admirable little book, very helpful in giving the teacher a background for work, especially on moral questions.

SANTAYANA, G., *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion*, Scribners, New York. \$1.50. The chapter, "The Elements of Poetry," is well worth reading.

SWEET, HENRY, *The Sounds of English*, Clarendon Press, Oxford. 2/6.

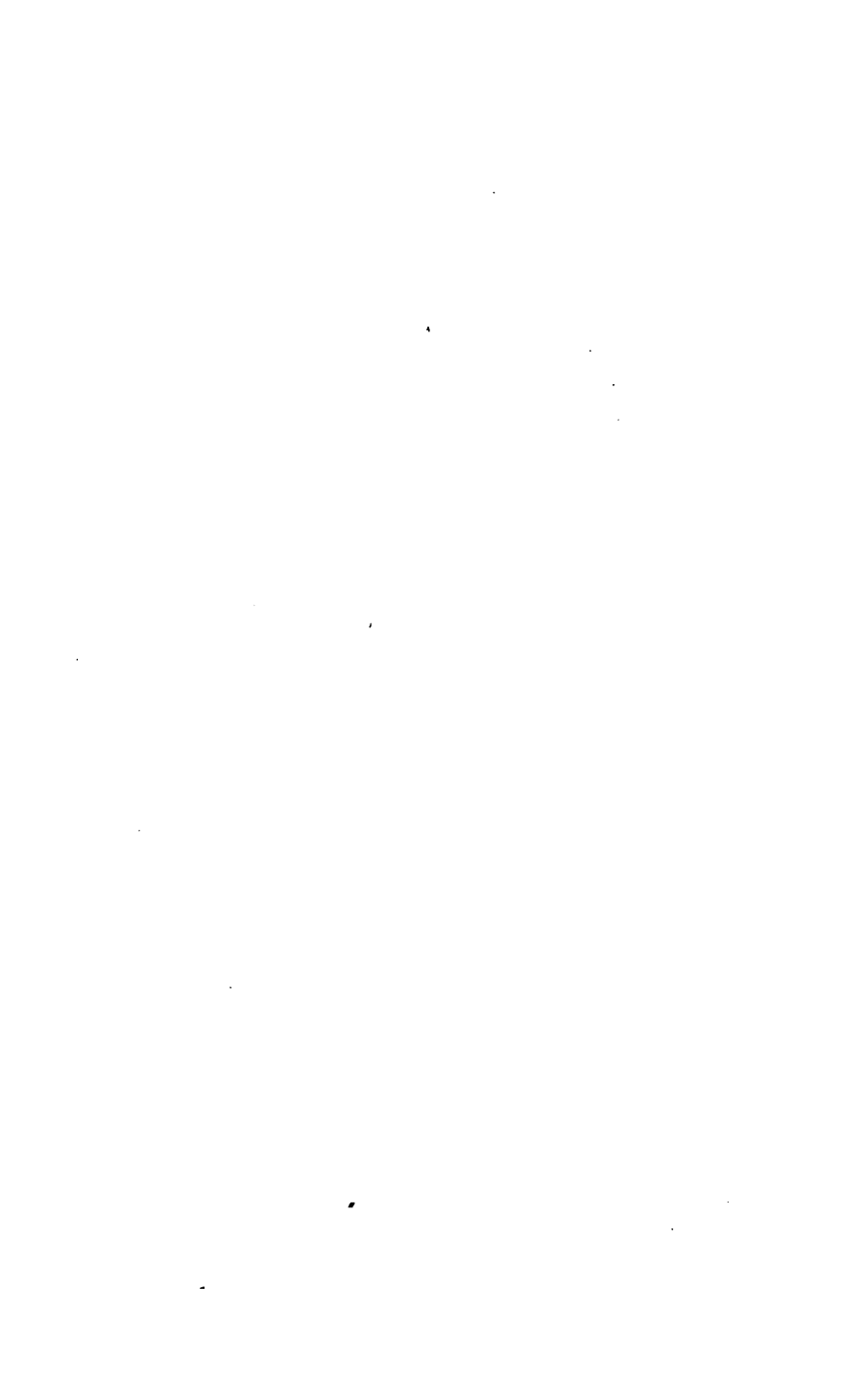
TISDEL, F. M., *Introduction to English Classics*, Macmillan, New York. 90c. Contains an outline of English literature and questions on the chief classics studied in high school.

VERITY, A. W., The Pitt Press Shakespeare for Schools, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, England; Putnams, New York. 40c. each. Practically all the plays commonly read in high school have been edited. A particularly excellent edition.

WINCHESTER, C. T., *Five Short Courses of Reading in English Literature*, Ginn, Boston. 50c. May be of help in suggesting readings.

WOODBERRY, G. E., *The Appreciation of Literature*, Doubleday, New York, 1907. \$1.50.

Heart of Man, Macmillan, New York. \$1.50. Contains "A New Defence of Poetry."



OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTORY

The problem	1
The present purpose	6
The elements or factors involved	8
(1) The teacher	9
(2) The pupil	11
(a) His general importance	11
(b) The pupil and the high-school stage	13
(c) Poetry and its relation to the pupils at the high-school stage	15
(3) The Poetry	16

II. SOME PRACTICAL WORK

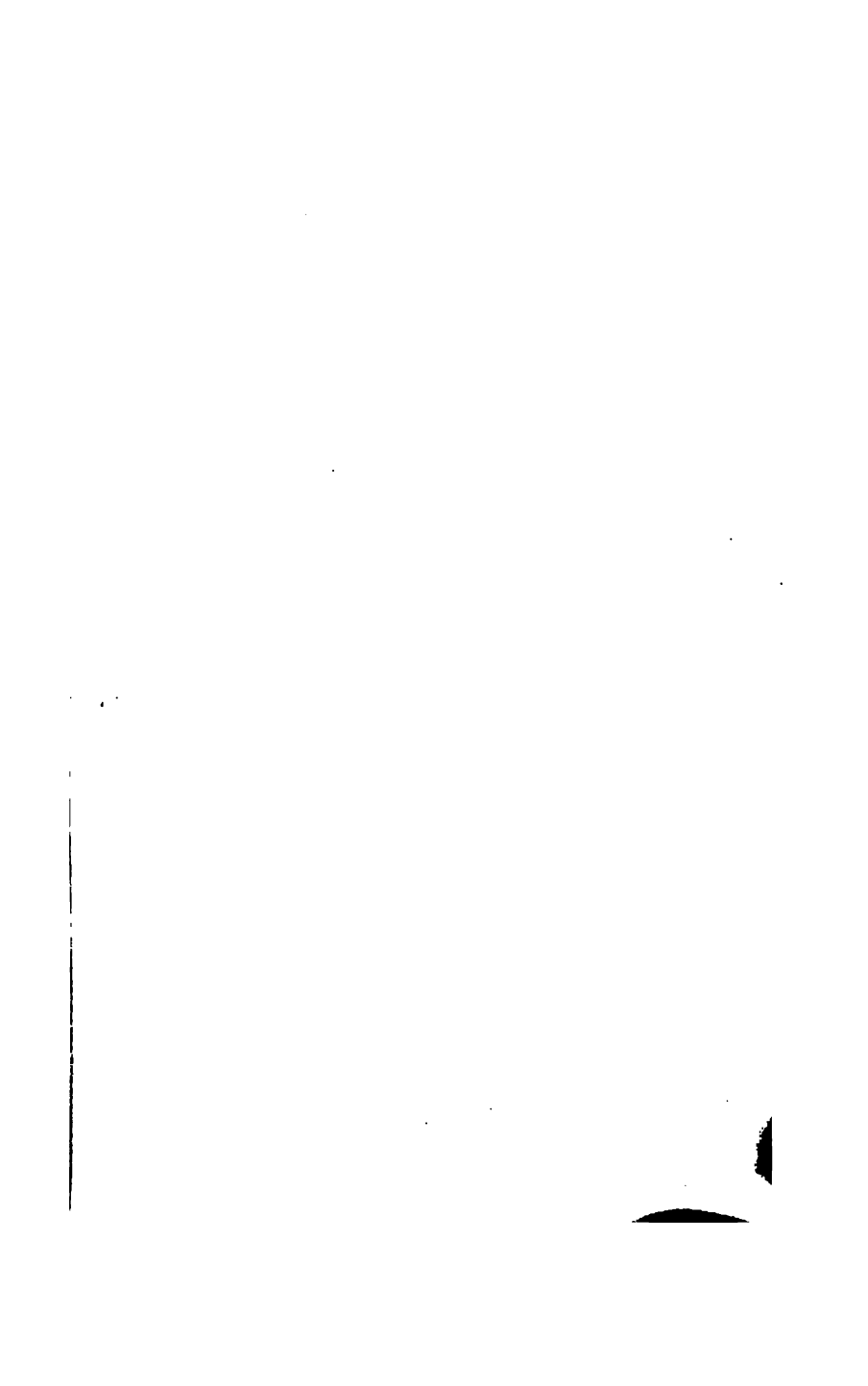
Browning's shorter poems	22
Browning's <i>Andrea del Sarto</i>	23

III. SOME FORMAL ELEMENTS

When and how to begin the study of a poem	71
The history of literature and its relation to the study of poetry	79
Memorizing	91
The value of good reading	96
Title and theme or true subject of a poem	103
The significance of the mental image in teaching poetry	107

OUTLINE

The study of verse-form	116
Poetic diction	118
Why study an evil or failing character?	129
Possible application of a poem	134
Composition and literature	139
Outside reading	142
Sight Work	148
Dramatization and other means of cultivating interest	151
Review and examination questions	156
The enjoyment of poetry in its relation to hard work	162
Poetry and the teaching of poetry	174
Bibliographical notes	177



STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
LIBRARY, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

To avoid fine, this book should be returned on
or before the date last stamped below

~~JUL 27 1935~~
~~FEB 23 1935~~

~~DEC 20 1939~~

~~NOV 4 1939~~

~~NOV 10 1939~~

~~DEC 7 1939~~

~~MAY 23 1940~~
~~JUN 10 1940~~

~~NOV 28 1950~~

AL ~~DEC 5 - 1950~~

~~DEC 5 - 1950~~

~~DEC 12 1950~~

~~DEC 10 1950~~

~~JAN 23 1952~~

MAR 19 1953

FEB 16 1958

MAY 27 1960

AUG 19 1966

JUN 18 1967

371.3424

F165

Copy 1

371.3424 .F165

The teaching of poetry in the
Stanford University Libraries



3 6105 033 387 510

246486

LIBRARY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

